

# **THE INSTITUTIONAL DYNAMICS OF PARTICIPATORY SLUM-UPGRADING PROCESSES: THE CASE OF LANGRUG INFORMAL SETTLEMENT**

By

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## **Abstract**

Since the 1990s, South Africa has faced a high rate of urbanization and increasing formation of informal settlements. However, the focus of urban planning has not changed to accommodate new urban trends. The current dominant practice of urban planning, still rooted in the global North realism, reflects an increasing discord between current approaches and growing problems of poverty, inequality, informality, rapid urbanisation and socio-spatial fragmentation. Traditional urban planning approaches and state-led direct settlement interventions have arguably served to exclude the urban poor with a marked failure to sustainably address the problem of informal settlements. This research examines the case of Stellenbosch, Western Cape, and argues that the concept of coproduction is an alternative dynamic model that could be used to achieve inclusive and sustainable urban environments.

Re-organising institutional relationships would arguably lead to a more successful service production approach and engagement between the state and the urban poor. I use the lens of coproduction to assess partnership-based in-situ community-driven informal settlement interventions. The research uses the Langrug informal settlement upgrading programme as a case study to analyse the institutional arrangements and to examine power relations in a context-specific coproduction process. The research uses semi-structured interviews, field observations and secondary data to examine the nature of the partnership, institutional relations, scope and approach of the Langrug upgrade programme.

The study concludes that the Langrug upgrade programme depicts a typical coproduction arrangement where many institutions are collaborating to improve the living conditions of the urban poor in Langrug. Further, the study establishes that the success of this partnership depends on on-going effective management of power and institutional dynamics and low-level conflicts. The study recommends that the Slum Dwellers International (SDI) alliance needs to build stronger grassroots structures in Stellenbosch to increase local capacity in community mobilisation and advocacy. Besides the need to incorporate the media, the partnership must improve the communication system among partners and stakeholders to avoid mistrust and ensure productive state-society engagement. Finally, more comparative case research needs to be done to consolidate arguments on the concept of coproduction vis-à-vis planning practice in the global South.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACHR.....	Asian Coalition for Housing Rights
ANC.....	African National Congress
APG.....	Architecture, Planning and Geomatics
BNG.....	Breaking New Ground
BoR.....	Bill of Rights
CBO.....	Community-based Organisation
CODI.....	Community Organisation Development Institute
COHRE.....	Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions
CORC.....	Community Organisation Resource Centre
COSATU.....	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CUF.....	Community Upgrading Fund
CWS.....	Cities Without Slums
DLP.....	Dignified Living Programme
DoH.....	Department of Housing
DoHS.....	Department of Human Settlements
DoIS.....	Department of Informal Settlements
DoPLG.....	Department of Provincial and Local Government
FEDUP.....	Federation of the Urban Poor
GEAR.....	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
GIS.....	Geographic Information System
IDP.....	Integrated Development Plan
IHSP.....	Integrated Human Settlement Plan

ISN.....	Informal Settlement Network
LCL.....	Langrug Community Leadership
MCRP.....	Master of City and Regional Planning
MDGs.....	United Nations' Millennium Development Goals
MoS.....	Municipality of Stellenbosch
MoU.....	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO.....	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSDF.....	National Slum Dwellers Federation
OPP.....	Orangi Pilot Project
PHP.....	People's Housing Process
PIE.....	Prevention of Illegal Eviction
PWP.....	Public Works Programme
RDP.....	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RSA.....	Republic of South Africa
SAHPF.....	South African Homeless and People's Federation
SALGA.....	South African Local Government Association
SDBP.....	Services Delivery Business Plan
SDF.....	Spatial Development Framework
SDFN.....	Shack/Slum Dwellers Federation of Namibia
SDI.....	Slum/Shack Dwellers International
SPARC.....	Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres
UCT.....	University of Cape Town
UISP.....	Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme
UN-Habitat.....	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
WPI.....	Worcester Polytechnic Institute

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

### **1.0. Overview**

This chapter provides the overall introduction of this research project. The chapter seeks to provide the basis for the entire dissertation. To do this, the chapter is divided into six sections: in section one, I provide the background to the research. I use section two to present the research problem. Using section three, I state my philosophical position through which the case is interpreted. I further use section four to describe the Langrug settlement upgrading programme. In section five, I present the significance of the research by explaining the nature and potential use of the research product. I use section six to conclude this chapter and to state the outline of the entire dissertation.

### **1.1. Background of the issue to be investigated**

Since the 1990s, South Africa has faced a high rate of urbanization and increasing formation of informal settlements. Influenced by population growth and migration, this trend has caused uncontrolled development of unplanned urban settlements where people live in poor and unhealthy conditions. In 1994, there were approximately 300 urban informal settlements in South African cities and by 2009 the number had grown to approximately 2,600. These settlements are home to somewhere between 1.1 and 1.4 million households (Del Mistro & Hensher, 2009: 333). The problem still persists despite the fact that since 1994, the South African government has committed considerable resources to build approximately 3.2 million houses (Huchzermeyer, 2003). Thus, millions in South African urban citizens are still subjected to inadequate dwelling conditions with lack of proper infrastructural services. The residents of these urban informal settlements are exposed to contagious diseases and other life threatening hazards.

The continued escalation of the challenge of informal settlements indicates that the South African government has failed to ensure that rapid urban growth is supported by investments in public services in informal settlements. Undeniably, the resources that are put in by government to build formal housing and upgrade informal settlements in South Africa are insufficient and may never be enough. Hence, the current dominant approach to informal settlement upgrading in South Africa, where focus is on delivery of low-income housing and forceful interventions to eradicate informal settlements, is not only insufficient but equally inefficient and is no longer sustainable. The approach will not in itself lead to improved living conditions among the urban poor. A major challenge of the 'government-as-provider' strategy is government's claim of constant lack of resources. Lack of resources has, in turn,

made it impossible to regulate and integrate a system of equitable access to land, housing and basic services. Thus, all South African cities continue to expose a large proportion of the urban poor to dehumanizing living conditions that threaten human dignity.

### **1.2. Problem to be investigated**

The main argument is that current direct approaches to informal settlement interventions are failing to sustainably address the problem of informal settlements in Stellenbosch in particular and South Africa in general. The direct approach is also criticised for its use of interventions that seek to 'eradicate' informal settlements through forceful and discredited means such as relocations and evictions, which disrupt survival strategies amongst the urban poor. Thus, current dominant settlement interventions disrupt social networks, raise transportation costs, increase social exclusion and deepen poverty among the urban poor. The direct approaches to informal settlement upgrading in South Africa have main shortfalls which could be summed up in the following listed points:

- i. In the face of rising number of informal settlements and increasing demand for low cost housing, the approach has failed to address the increase in housing backlog and poverty;
- ii. The approach does not give due attention to adequate understanding and sustenance of survival strategies within informal settlements;
- iii. The approach focuses on individual housing particularly in peripherally located areas to the detriment of other settlement imperatives like ensuring sustainable livelihoods; and this serves to perpetuate poverty and in a different guise entrenches the previous apartheid planning system in a democratic South Africa.

(Huchzermeyer, 2003; 2009).

These challenges characterise the efforts to upgrade informal settlements in an environment where there exists good laws and policies. Accordingly, legislations, such as the Housing White Paper of 1994, Constitution of 1996, Housing Act of 1997, and the Breaking New Ground (BNG) policy of 2004 were enacted largely to redress apartheid inequalities. However, these policies, laws and subsequent activities have not addressed the urban crisis in the municipality of Stellenbosch. Urban poor households continue to face extreme exposure to socio-economic and environmental hazards and they increasingly lack quality infrastructure to guarantee public services while their capacity to adapt to the dynamics of poverty remains limited (Tshikotshi, 2009). Bearing in mind the presence of fairly good legal

and policy provisions, I would argue that the challenge to deliver adequate public services by and large calls for an exploration of new delivery approaches. This is where models and concepts such as coproduction need contextual analysis and interrogation to derive practical lessons and theory propositions for scaling up and for further inquiry.

Coproduction refers to a mechanism in which urban planning and delivery of public goods and services uses a system that regards built environment professionals and urban citizens as equal partners in informal settlement upgrading processes (Mitlin, 2008; Bovaird, 2007). Coproduction entails active involvement of both state and non-state actors in producing public goods and services. Thus, the concept could be an alternative approach that would promote in-situ settlement upgrading with a direct positive impact on survival strategies of the urban poor. By its nature, coproduction could provide a frame for planning practice where residents of informal settlements could be considered resourceful and could contribute towards positive gains in settlement interventions. Following Albrechts (2012), the current institutional arrangements whereby government agencies are sole producers of urban goods and services for the urban poor and where citizens are passive consumers, cannot guarantee adequate services. “This approach has made traditional approaches to urban planning for service delivery and management outdated and in need of rethinking” (Bovaird, 2007: 846). The search for re-organising the relationship between all actors in a more open and equitable relationship would arguably lead to a more likely successful service production approach and engagement between the state and the urban poor (Albrechts, 2012; Watson, 2012; Whitaker, 1980; Bovaird, 2007). As such, coproduction has the potential to mobilise informal settlements and their residents to contribute in many ways, such as:

- ❖ Human capital: information, knowledge, skills and local labour;
- ❖ Natural capital: raw materials, water and land;
- ❖ Financial capital: income, savings and access to locally administered credit;
- ❖ Social capital: building associations, productive state-society relations, savings and federations;
- ❖ Physical capital: tools, equipment and space.

Given its potential benefits in settlement interventions, the practice of coproduction needs a thorough inquiry to assess its application, derive lessons and provide recommendations for further application and inquiry. Hence, this research uses coproduction as the conceptual framework through which to interpret the findings. Accordingly, this case study considers

coproduction as an alternative approach to urban planning for equitable and sustainable urban informal settlement upgrading. Using the Langrug informal settlement upgrading programme as a case study, the research analyses the institutional arrangements and examines power relations in a context-specific coproduction process. Having established the research issue, the following section presents my philosophical position as the lens through which I interpret this research.

### **1.3. My philosophical position**

I believe for planning to deliver desired goods and services for the urban poor, there is need to recognise that without active participation of the beneficiaries, the capacity of many global South governments to provide goods and services is severely compromised (Mitlin, 2008). Thus, the provision of public goods and services to improve informal settlements should be driven by a different kind of institutional arrangement under a framework that is agreed upon between the parties for the common welfare of the urban poor. Hence, the delivery and management of public goods and services should no longer be a preserve of planning professionals and civic managers, but rather, should actively involve users and members of communities in shaping decisions and planning outcomes (Bovaird, 2007). This demands planning to broaden its scope and develop a more collaborative model that should consider the urban poor, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations as resourceful and contributors to improved urban environments. In this regard, the task of planning theorists must involve exploring ways of how the urban service user can become an integral coproducer of civic goods and services. Accordingly, planning should start to emphasise the need for service users and communities on one hand, and planning professionals on the other, to work together in the production and management processes of public goods and services. Moreover, settlement upgrading is not a theoretical task that can be deliberated and thereafter implemented through top-down mechanisms. It is a much more practical task that needs active engagement with the urban poor as beneficiaries. Further, I believe that with increasing service protests and uprisings in many cities of the global South, service delivery models that involve active insertion of grassroots voices could lead to the state gaining more legitimacy and could promote productive state-society relations. This is so because issues of land, shelter and service delivery are fundamental to harmonious state-society relations.

In addition, I believe coproduction can make the delivery of public goods and services more efficient, effective and equitable as users would make modest but enduring contributions

towards settlement improvements. This would transform the way services are delivered in cities experiencing massive inequalities. The approach can make urban planning and public service delivery recognise user's experience as necessary in shaping urban policy regarding informal settlement improvement (Clarke & Newman, 1997). Additionally, coproduction through its recognition of user and community agency and empowerment rather than dependency has the potential to transform user's attitudes in ways that can improve service quality. As such, I view coproduction as a unique move away from the traditional client model that regards users and communities as mere consumers of housing and service packages offered to them (Leadbeater, 2004; Needham, 2008). Further, by emphasising user input into the coproduction process, I consider coproduction necessary for achieving allocative efficiencies and positioning planning professionals more responsively to user preferences and needs (Needham, 2008). In this way, the concept of coproduction should be used to transform the traditional role of planning professionals and civic managers from being sole producers to assume new responsibilities. Having stated my ethical position, I now turn to the next section to describe the Langrug programme.

#### **1.4. Description of the case**

In Stellenbosch, where the case study will be executed, the housing backlog is at 19,701 households, and more than 20,000 families live in informal settlements. The Municipality of Stellenbosch receives 300 housing subsidies per year, and therefore families could wait up to 130 years to receive a subsidised house (Slum Dwellers International (SDI), 2012). Langrug alone is home to 2118 shacks containing over 4700 people, and of this number, one third have no access to electricity and sanitary facilities.

In attempts to respond to this challenge, the Municipality of Stellenbosch restructured its core municipal functions and created the Department of Informal Settlements to effectively manage informal settlements. The department is tasked with the core mandate of strategising around the challenges of urbanisation, informal settlements and service delivery. One of the guiding values in the municipality has been that the upgrading of informal settlements can serve as a people-driven and pro-poor solution to this urban settlement crisis. Giving effect to their conviction, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed in 2011 between Stellenbosch Municipality, the community of Langrug, and Community Organisation Resource Centre (CORC/SDI) to guide the Langrug partnership-based in-situ community-driven informal settlement upgrading processes. Since then, the partners have jointly supported capital and operational community-initiated projects. The initiative prioritises



investments in both hard and social community infrastructures. This agreement sees the Municipality contributing R2 million per year, while CORC/SDI contributes a further R1.5 million per year. Besides other forms of contribution towards the programme, the community of Langrug through community savings contributed R12, 000 in 2011 (SDI, 2012). During the signing ceremony in 2011, the Executive Mayor of Stellenbosch, H.E. Mr. Conrad Sidego, said: The benefits of this partnership are far-reaching and should be viewed as a paradigm shift in municipal governance (SDI, 2012). Jockin Arputham, the president of SDI addressed the residents of the informal settlements and advised: If everyone depends on the housing waiting list, it might be 25 to 40 years; and then you won't even get water or a toilet.

Thus, this initiative is unique and involves many active participants such as the Informal Settlement Network (ISN), CORC, Stellenbosch Municipality, SDI, the University of Cape Town's School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics (APG) and Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) as implementing institutions. This partnership between the South African SDI alliance and the Stellenbosch Municipality for the upgrading of Langrug provides a typical case of coproduction in informal settlement upgrading initiatives (SDI, 2012; Mitlin, 2008; Yin, 2003). The initiative involves participatory funding and an implementation mechanism that considers the community as resourceful and coproducers of civic goods and services. To date, the community, municipality, SDI and CORC have intensified their collaboration and the settlement continues to witness steady improvement. Having described the nature of the case study, I now use the following section to present the nature and potential use of the research product.

### **1.5. The type and potential uses of the research product: Contribution of the study**

The objectives of this research are summarised as follows:

- i. To develop a better understanding of coproduction processes in settlement upgrading, in order to determine whether the processes could lead to improvements in the living conditions of the urban poor;
- ii. To develop an enhanced understanding of the complex situation under which the upgrading programmes and coproduction processes take place, in order to suggest modifications and improvements of the programme and draw lessons for future policies and programmes;

- iii. To come up with realistic recommendations to improve the Langrug partnership and for future upgrade policies and programmes so that more substantive gains can be achieved for the urban poor in Langrug and within Stellenbosch;
- iv. To see if the concepts and case studies which have emerged in other parts of the world can be used to explain the nature of the relationships in the Langrug upgrade project.

The study contributes ideas towards the debate on how urban planners and other built environment professionals might position themselves in coproduction processes during settlement upgrades. The report contributes ideas on whether coproduction provides an appropriate framework that can coordinate settlement planning initiatives by government, non-governmental organisation, users and communities in their efforts to improve the living conditions of the urban poor. The study also generates ideas to deepen the understanding of the theory of coproduction as an emerging mode of city planning and urban renewal. Further, the study contributes to the body of planning theory ideas by illuminating the call by Watson (2009) for planning theory to focus on “the relationship between on the one hand, techno-managerial, modernising and marketised systems of state planning and service provision, and on the other hand, marginalised and impoverished urban populations surviving largely under conditions of informality” (Watson, 2009:2259; 2012). By so doing, the study critically examines the theory of coproduction as a planning model in which different imperatives and rationalities come into clear juxtaposition, engagement and contestation with others, and where contentious issues are either rendered technical or perhaps where real gains can be secured by marginalised groups (Li, 2007).

Finally, I provide policy recommendations on partnership-based in-situ community-driven settlement upgrading initiatives by the Municipality of Stellenbosch (MoS) and the SDI alliance. Further, the report contributes policy ideas that demonstrate the benefits and limitations of coproduction as a normative position for city planners and Slum/Shack Dwellers International. In addition, the study adds to ideas on the role of the state and non-state institutions in achieving efficiency and sustainability in informal settlement upgrading and inclusive urban development. Das and Takahashi (2009:229) argue that an “institutional framework determines the terms and conditions of participation and this has the potential to influence the objectivity and the efficiency of urban development processes”. Now that I have

established the main product and objectives of this research, the following section provides the conclusion of this chapter and presents the organization of the entire dissertation.

### **1.6. Conclusion: Layout of the dissertation**

This dissertation is structured by seven interlinked chapters. Chapter one has presented the background, research problem, philosophical position, objectives and the significance of the research. Chapter 2 reviews existing literature on coproduction to provide a theoretical framework that underpins this research. With reference to the research topic, I use the third section to discuss case study research method. Chapter three also presents the research paradigm, research question, data collection and data analysis processes, and methodological limitations and remedies. Chapter four covers the policy environment with a focus on selected relevant existing national and municipal policies and pieces of legislation on the issue of informal settlements and housing in both Stellenbosch and South Africa. I use chapter five to present the research findings from the field. Chapter six presents more specific and in-depth findings of the study in relation to the theoretical framework as discussed in chapter two. The abridgement and analysis of the results is based on the interviews, observations and field visits that were conducted in May and June 2013. Finally, chapter seven provides conclusions and recommendations. The chapter contains reflections on the entire research project and then suggests recommendations based on the findings. In the next chapter, I discuss the concept of coproduction to provide a theoretical framework for this research.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0. Overview: Coproduction as an emerging approach to urban planning**

This chapter reviews the concept of coproduction in order to provide a framework through which to ground the research. While focusing on the meaning and application of coproduction as presented and applied by Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) and its country-level alliances, the review also provides a brief appraisal of the concept as promoted by political economist Elinor Ostrom. This chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section, I explain the concept of coproduction from two different perspectives presented by Elinor Ostrom and SDI. In the second section, I use some case studies to illustrate the nature and processes of SDI's version of coproduction. I use the third section to present some limitations of grassroots coproduction as a pro-poor approach to informal settlement upgrading. In the final section, I provide a summary of the chapter and introduce the chapter on research methodology. The following section elucidates the subjective meanings and applications of coproduction.

### **2.1. Coproduction: A new perspective of planning theory and practice**

The concept of coproduction is raising interest in planning theory. The concept is seemingly useful when analysing the area of state-society engagement, as well as building planning theory based on case studies of engagements which are happening in many cities of the global South (Watson, (Forthcoming). Though the SDI's version of coproduction is different, the concept finds its roots in Political Economy and Public Administration literature and was brought to prominence by political economist Elinor Ostrom (1996). Further, if Brownhill and Parker (2010) suggestion that we are now in a 'post-collaborative' era, and that there is growing attention to planning issues in the global South, where informality and splintering urbanism is the everyday practise (Graham & Marvin, 2001), then the concept of coproduction embodies some promise for twenty-first century planning practice. The following paragraphs delve into Ostrom's versions of coproduction.

#### **2.1.1. Theorising coproduction from above: Elinor Ostrom's version**

Political economist Elinor Ostrom defines "coproduction as a process through which inputs from individuals who are not in the same organization are transformed into goods and services" (Ostrom, 1996:1073). Ostrom focuses on a model of providing public goods and services in which the state involves communities to create synergies through which parties contribute in different but complementary ways. Here, the relationship is a direct one between communities and the state with no defined role of non-governmental organisations.

Joshi and Moore (2004) use the term ‘institutionalized coproduction’ to refer to hybrid forms of state-society engagement designed to provide goods and services through a regular long-term relationship between state agencies and organised groups of citizens, where both make substantial resource contributions. This form of coproduction assumes that power is evenly distributed in space and across different levels of government (Pal, 2006). The “other preposition that shapes Ostrom’s view of the concept is that the values that shape our normative view of society and that set the goals of planning are shared universally” (Pal, 2006: 505). Accordingly, this kind of coproduction assumes that the relationship between state and citizens is always fair, consensual, and not corrupt or politicised, and that power relations and conflict are not central to achieving an effective coproduction arrangement (Watson, (Forthcoming). However, in reality, neither of these assumptions holds water (Pal, 2006). This realisation serves as a cornerstone of SDI and its activities. Furthermore, Mitlin (2008: 347) argues that Ostrom’s version of “coproduction does not locate itself within a broader struggle for choice, self-determination and meso-level political relations in which citizens with support from civic membership movements seek an engagement with the state to secure redistribution, self-management and local control over local service provision.” As such, bottom-up coproduction is fundamentally different from Ostrom’s version, though Albrechts (2012) seems to provide only slight differences between the two forms of coproduction.

Coproduction is also a policy concept that describes the potential relationship that could exist between the government as a regular producer of public goods and services and citizens as clients and users of these goods and services (Ostrom, 1996). In public policy terms, the model allows bureaucrats and citizens to play an active and complementary role to increase the scope and expand government’s service delivery capacity (Needham, 2008). In this regard, coproduction is a democratic endeavour conceived as a combination of needs-based and rights-based approaches to development planning and provides an interaction for effective delivery of public goods and services. Considering coproduction as state-led, Bovaird (2007) says the model involves the provision of services through regular long-term relationships between professionalised public service providers and service users, where all actors make substantial resources contributions. Ostrom’s coproduction has been extensively applied in public administration and policy in the global North especially in the United Kingdom and the United States of America (Bovaird, 2007; Needham, 2006). The following paragraphs present SDI’s coproduction as different from coproduction from above.

### **2.1.2. Theorising coproduction from below: The practice of SDI**

Tagged as bottom-up or grassroots coproduction, SDI and its country-level alliances are engaged in “joint production of settlement services between citizens and the state, with anyone or more elements of the production process being shared” (Mitlin, 2008: 340). Besides being a mechanism for achieving shared informal settlement improvement solutions, grassroots coproduction is a route through which the organised urban poor may choose to consolidate their local organisation base and augment their capacity to negotiate successfully with the state (Mitlin, 2008). The best coproduction arrangement for inclusive transformation of informal settlements is when institutional arrangements enable active participation of all partners in the production and delivery processes of public services. In this context, appropriate institutional arrangements are critical in order to create a framework that accommodates government officials, politicians, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community residents (Mitlin, 2008; Parks, et al., 1981; Marschall, 2004).

Grassroots coproduction seems to be driven by the need for a different kind of authority for some kinds of urban service delivery, not one that is imposed from above and maintained through coercion (Mitlin, 2008). This implies that such partnerships should be based on an arrangement that is agreed between the parties and maintained through on-going social relations and pre-defined partner responsibilities (Mitlin, 2008). Thus, in building these relationships, grassroots coproduction entails a system through which local residents get actively involved in local planning decisions, financing, implementation and management of settlement upgrading initiatives. This sort of state-society engagement seeks to orient citizens towards self-management and local control over the provision of basic needs (Mitlin, 2008; Watson, 2012). The following paragraphs argue that grassroots coproduction is a form of deep democracy.

### **2.1.3. Coproduction as a form of ‘deep democracy’**

Coproduction has major democratic implications because it locates users and communities more centrally in the decision making processes and demands an amicable interface between service users and the government (Bovaird, 2007; Mitlin, 2008). Unlike in Ostrom’s form of coproduction, SDI as a civic movement has a defined role of mobilizing and mediating between state ways of operations and non-state actors to ensure collective democratic practice (Appadurai, 2001). These coproduction arrangements represent efforts to reconstitute citizenship in cities that are marked by the staggering presence of informality and poverty. Such efforts take the form, in part, of what may be referred to as ‘deep democracy’ and signal

the emergency of a new era of urban development and management that I may categorise as ‘post-collaborative approaches’ to planning. SDI realises that in the global South cities, where resources are scarce and institutions of governance are weak, “representative democracy suffers from skewed power and resource distribution and that it often fails to effectively represent the interests of the urban poor” (Pal, 2006:505; Etemadi, 2004). As such, grassroots coproduction relies on networks that provide new horizontal modes for articulating the deep democratic politics of the locality, creating hitherto groupings and partnerships that champion inclusive urban development (Roy, 2009; Mitlin, 2004; Zunino, 2006). Appadurai (2001) describes such practices in urban development and management as the dawn of deepening democracy supported by increasing globalisation from below.

In addition, effective delivery of local goods and services to all community citizens requires some level of local democratic practice, a genuine need to work together, but this is still difficult within a modern democratic state. While state agencies may see themselves as key and above other stakeholders (Mitlin, 2008), elected politicians may consider themselves most legitimated by the elections to control and supervise all urban development practice (Pal, 2006). Conversely, SDI practice of participatory settlement upgrading seeks to further democratic principles and responds to the ironies of democratic will and practice in delivering urban services in urban locales where delivery of basic services is rather dismal and exclusionary (Appadurai, 2001; Albrechts, 2012; Mitlin, 2008; Joshi & Moore, 2004). As such, membership associations and movements present a post-Marxist and post-developmental vision of new forms of democracy and act as devolved networks and mechanisms through which the poor show that they are better able to provide for their basic needs rather than being the usual victims of the market and the state (Appadurai, 2001). The following paragraphs present community mobilisation strategies deployed by SDI for effective engagement with the state.

#### **2.1.4. Coproduction as a grassroots strategy**

Mitlin (2008) argues that SDI’s work is a political strategy for securing effective relations between state institutions and the urban poor so as to jointly transform appalling living conditions for the urban poor (Mitlin, 2008). Mitlin (2008) further maintains that SDI’s coproduction is different from standard ‘participation’ in urban planning and settlement transformation (Watson, (forthcoming) as it is characterised by a particular set and sequence of grassroots practices which are passionately and collectively termed ‘the SDI rituals’ (Appadurai, 2001; Mitlin, 2008; Hassan, 2006; Watson, 2012). These rituals form the basis

for state engagement in order to coproduce public services so as to transform informal settlements and improve living conditions among the urban poor. The following paragraphs elucidate the rituals of the SDI operations (Watson, (forthcoming); Mitlin, 2008; Bryan, 2011; Hassan, 2006; Huchzermeyer, 2009a; Karanja, 2010; Patel, Arputham, Burra, & Savchuk, 2009).

#### **2.1.4.1. Self-enumerations and profiling: ‘Knowledge is Power, and when in Doubt Count’**

SDI and its global networks consider self-enumerations, profiling and mapping of informal settlements very central to their operations. Useful data which generally covers living conditions of all households in a given informal settlement is captured and the results are used to generate key development issues for the entire settlement. The results are equally very useful for ensuring mutual engagements between the state and its agencies on one hand, and the urban poor on the other hand, to jointly address the inadequacies in settlement infrastructural services (Patel, Baptist, & D’Cruz, 2012). The self-enumeration tactic is regularly used to reinforce and specify demands by urban poor communities, and to increase their ‘visibility’ to the state (Watson, (forthcoming)). SDI and its affiliates and federating groups apply the survey, the map and the plan as traditional tools of urban planning and governance and as a mechanism to further the claims of the urban poor (Watson, (forthcoming)). Residents of informal settlements in collaboration with support NGOs use community surveys to quantify themselves, and to create documentary proof that they exist as a collective that can engage and work with government (Watson, (forthcoming)). The practice of self-enumeration encourages a common understanding, unity and dialogue among community members and groups, and facilitates productive state-society engagements in deciding, planning and implementing development projects to transform informal settlements (Watson, 2012).

#### **2.1.4.2. Savings schemes and precedent setting**

The SDI and its national alliances regard small scale savings schemes as a central aspect of their work. Savings provide an entry point for relationship building between individuals and groups (Mitlin, 2008). Savings also build a culture of savings and promote financial discipline besides ensuring commitment to the public good (Appadurai, 2001). The SDI system believes that savings is more than just raising money for self-help and community engineered infrastructural developments but rather, as a ‘collection of people’ towards addressing their settlement challenges. Another SDI ritual is ‘precedent setting’, a term used



to describe the collective building of infrastructural models like shacks and toilets, during big events and meetings (Watson, (forthcoming)). Precedent setting and infrastructural exhibitions seek to demonstrate that the poor have the knowledge, capacity and expertise to construct their own housing and facilities, and that the standard flow of expert knowledge can be reversed or augmented to serve the material interests of the urban poor (Appadurai, 2001). Both savings and precedent setting are key components of the SDI version of coproduction as they serve as critical modes of engaging the state and securing funding for settlement infrastructure and housing improvement.

#### **2.1.4.3. Learning exchanges**

The SDI and its country-level alliances consider learning and knowledge production very central in repositioning the poor to take charge of their welfare. To give effect to this, they prioritise learning strategies between and within communities (Watson, (forthcoming)). SDI plays a crucial role of facilitating exchange visits for organised groups of the urban poor between sites and regions for the purpose of sharing knowledge and strategies regarding community savings, reconstruction and engagement with authorities (Watson, 2012; Mitlin, 2008; Karanja, 2010). McFarlane (2011:69) refers to these exchanges as “trans-local urban learning assemblages’ of materials, practices, designs, knowledge, personal stories and local histories” to foster urban learning and alignment between the social and the material at different sites. This increases the capacity of urban poor to engage the state and also provides undisputable proof for the viability of community engineered urban development solutions.

#### **2.1.4.5. Engaging government on planning and settlement upgrading**

Enumerations and mapping processes precede actual settlement upgrading and reconstruction processes. SDI and its alliances promote community-driven planning and project implementation processes. This coproduction process is realised through a social and political process involving savings groups, networks, negotiating with government, drawing on academics for technical assistance, and establishing local development committees (Watson, 2012; Appadurai, 2001). The role of the state has been in granting land and tenure rights and providing larger elements of infrastructure (Appadurai, 2001). The state also collaborates with SDI and its alliances in coproducing relevant information and planning knowledge (Mitlin, 2008) with state institutions sanctioning and participating in enumeration processes and in SDI-organized ‘learning exchanges’ (Watson, (forthcoming); Chitekwe-Biti, Mudima, Nyama, & Jera, 2012). In further cases, city and national governments assist the SDI with land and communal services while federations and SDI country-level alliances actively

participate in the actual construction of houses and delivery of public services (Mitlin, 2008). Mitlin (2008) considers these bottom-up, self-organised coproduction processes as substantive with an inherent political aim to change the balance of power between state and society and reposition ordinary citizens to have significant control over state resources (Watson, (forthcoming)). The following section presents some successful coproduction engagements by SDI in some cities of the global South.

### **2.2.1. Cases studies: Where has grassroots coproduction worked?**

The concept of coproduction has been applied in many cities in the global South and this has been championed, by and large, by the SDI and its country-level alliances (Tovivich, 2009; Watson, (forthcoming); Mitlin, 2008). In Pakistan for instance, a local NGO called the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP), a Pakistan SDI equivalent, developed new solutions to appalling living conditions related to inadequate health and sanitation infrastructures. These problems afflicted residents of a large informal settlement in Karachi (Hassan, 2006; Mitlin, 2008), thus, prompting the local membership organisation to develop an alternative service delivery model that involved resident's financial contribution towards upgrading water and sanitation facilities and infrastructures. The role of the municipality was to upgrade the wider sewer networks and waste treatment plants (Hassan, 2006). Wanting improved services, local residents cooperated with both government agencies and the NGO by being actively involved in preparation, installation and management of community water and sanitation infrastructures. Active involvement of the local people in this project has made the residents of Karachi keen on representing the interests of the entire community in a more open, active and transparent engagement with the political and government systems (Hassan, 2006).

A second case involves the activities of Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia (SDFN), a member of the SDI network, which has applied coproduction to achieve traceable success in transforming the lives of many urban poor people living in informal settlements of the city of Windhoek (Mitlin, 2008). The Namibian federation is a grassroots organization anchored by women-led savings schemes within very low-income settlements (Muller & Mitlin, 2004). Together with the city government, the federation devised a policy whereby organized groups were able to occupy land with only communal services such as toilet blocks and standpipes. The motivation was based on devising joint low-cost settlement solutions so that all residents could have development opportunities that would transform their living conditions (Mitlin, 2008). To date, three thousand and one hundred (3,100) federation members have secured land while over one thousand urban poor have access to micro loans for improving

infrastructural services and housing (Mitlin, 2008). Recognising these grassroots-driven efforts, the national government of Namibia now co-finance these initiatives through grants towards community loan fund which is managed by the Namibia SDI Alliance (Mitlin, 2008).

Baan Mankong informal settlement upgrading programme is also an example of a successful SDI engagement in Thailand. According to Boonyabancha (2005), the Thai government in 2003 implemented an ambitious informal settlement upgrading programme through the Community Organization Development Institute (CODI). CODI which is Thai's equivalence of SDI worked with government officials, community-based organisations, academics, and communities in upgrading many informal settlements across Thailand (Boonyabancha, 2005). The programme involved channelling government funds in the form of grants, subsidies and housing loans direct to poor communities for improving housing, land tenure and infrastructural services. In turn, mobilised residents in each settlement planned and implemented activities to improve their community and housing environments. The alliance, provided low-interest loans to households for formalisation of land ownership, housing and services improvement (Boonyabancha, 2005). Special activities were implemented in Ayutthaya, Thailand's old capital city and a world heritage site. In this city, the alliance surveyed and mapped all informal settlements. The alliance then organized a seminar with the city authorities, where survey information was presented. Using the survey results, the community showed and proved that it would be possible to improve their living conditions in their settlements, bring in basic services, and construct improved houses with minimal community disruptions while allowing the monuments to be upgraded. This case showed that poor communities and historic monuments can be good neighbours (Boonyabancha, 2005).

The key feature of Baan Mankong programme was its emphasis on supporting community collective savings as a means to mobilize both people and resources which ultimately strengthened community groups and built collective management skills at community level (Boonyabancha, 2005). The programme emphasized and recorded success in building networks around common land ownership, shared construction, cooperative enterprises, community welfare and collective maintenance of community infrastructures. Further, the programme was demand-driven as it supported communities that were ready to implement projects and supported projects based on community's needs, priorities and possibilities, while allowing communities to contribute in different forms including construction (Boonyabancha, 2005).

Karanja (2010) considers the enumeration exercise of informal settlements in the city of Kisumu as another example of a successful case of grassroots coproduction. Kisumu is Kenya's third largest city and is the capital of Nyanza Province. "The enumeration activities took place in April 2005 and March 2006 and were spearheaded by the inhabitants of the informal settlements with support from Kenyan SDI alliance" operating as Kenyan Homeless and Poor People's Federation with support from a local NGO called Pamoja Trust (Karanja, 2010: 217). The alliance "worked in collaboration with the local government of Kisumu and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme" (UN-Habitat) (Karanja, 2010: 224). The enumeration exercise provided the information base for an ambitious informal settlement upgrading programme. Community development committees were established in each settlement to create local leadership that managed community funds for micro-businesses and initiatives aimed at improving resident's livelihoods. The partners developed community-based mortgage finance systems to help support individual and collective tenant purchase schemes as a means of improving land and housing security. In each settlement, local structures were set up to ensure effective representation and participation of the wider community in the Cities Without Slums (CWS) Programme in Kisumu (Karanja, 2010).

Out of this project, community residents with support from grassroots movement organisations facilitated and supported the growth of 31 community-based savings schemes across Kisumu. By 2005, the schemes had an ever growing membership exceeding 4000 people. "Women's savings schemes contributed positively towards improved health services by developing initiatives such as providing loans for securing livelihoods, home-based care and promoting healthy living" (Karanja, 2010: 238). The project saw most of the communities in Kisumu having savings schemes that manage revolving funds drawn from their savings and run them as micro-loans for businesses and welfare purposes among their members (Karanja, 2010). The project also developed a community resource centre which is still operational and is entirely managed by the community members and remains open to all community groups from the informal settlements in the city (Karanja, 2010). This being a successful case of community driven coproduction, representatives of the Kisumu groups have gone on exchange visits to share their experiences and strategies in other parts of Kenya, Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda (Karanja, 2010; Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR), 2000).

Additionally, the SDI Indian alliance, comprising the NGO called Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres (SPARC), the National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF) and the

Mahila Milan has been very active in informal settlement upgrading programmes in India. The alliance in collaboration with the government of India managed to provide community-designed, built and managed public toilet blocks in Pune and Mumbai (Burra, Patel, & Kerr, 2003; Burra, 2005). The alliance used the construction of public toilet blocks to ensure change in the long standing traditional patron-client relationships between elected representatives and residents of informal settlements (Burra, 2005). Now in both Pune and Mumbai, the alliance has community-based 'toilet groups' working as a sector group for the larger federation. Burra (2005) argues that the uniqueness of this public sanitation project lies in its creation of opportunities and conditions for community-based informal settlement upgrading, where the urban poor could determine the process themselves rather than being passive objects of government and professional's designs. The strong mobilisation around public toilet project was as a result of strong culture of federating, savings and knowledge creation and sharing. Knowing that the state in both Pune and Mumbai had strong influence on people's access to goods and services, the alliance fostered productive partnerships with the state so as to achieve substantive improvements in the lives of the poor (Burra, 2005).

The use of coproduction to create openings for active citizen involvement in areas used to be traditionally reserved for the state within conventional urban service delivery models is proving very useful in transforming the living conditions among the urban poor. The SDI seeks to create a devolved citizen-managed space within existing state programmes. For example, the South African Homeless and People's Federation (SAHPF) negotiated with their government to have state capital for housing subsidy by funding People's Housing Process (PHP) (Mitlin, 2008). The PHP is an initiative that enables citizens to produce housing with the state subsidy rather than receive housing produced by private contractors and/or municipal authorities (Mitlin, 2008). Further, SDI through its "Indian Alliance played a critical role in the resettlement of twenty thousand (20,000) families in the city of Mumbai" (Mitlin, 2008: 349). In this case, the state recognised its lack of necessary capacity to manage the complexities of social relations in resettling such a big number of people living in informal settlements. The grassroots organisation was able to establish a valid system that enabled entitlements to be verified through a mapping system and other SDI rituals. These cases indicate that grassroots coproduction has the potential to secure planning outcomes that favour the urban poor. Analysing these cases and others from other global South cities, it is insightful that power dynamics and politics shape any coproduction arrangement and that any autonomous organising capacity can be seen as a threat by those in power (Mitlin, 2008). The

following paragraph seeks to expound the role of planners in an effective grassroots coproduction arrangement.

### **2.2.2. The role of planners in a grassroots coproduction**

In its processes, SDI employs the skills of the architects and planners based on the organisation's philosophy that the urban poor know best about how to survive in poverty (Hassan, 2006). As such, the worth of planners rests on providing the 'right guidance' rather than control over the settlement reconstruction processes. SDI believes that the planner and architect should 'ask the right questions' rather than provide all the answers and that professionals should assist the community in finding answers for themselves (Archer, Luansang, & Boonmahathanakorn, 2012; ACHR, 2011). In this respect, I deduce that there are three types of roles of planners who work for and with urban poor communities (Tovivich, 2009). Firstly, planners work as providers when they make decisions with communities on settlement and housing design issues such as standardized infrastructure, housing and site plans. Secondly, planners work as supporting officials when they exchange knowledge with community members to facilitate a planning and design process, and on technical issues like basic design principles which concern safety, cost estimation and post-construction management. Thirdly, planners operate as catalysts that use the planning processes for local capacity building in order to mobilize a community around common settlement problems. Thus, a "catalytic planner encourages community members to question their own situations, problems and find solutions together" (Tovivich, 2009:71). The next section argues out some enabling factors and limitations for effective grassroots coproduction.

### **2.3. The necessary ingredients for realising productive grassroots coproduction**

Coproduction is not a panacea as there are problems such as conflicts that arise from differences in approach, values, unclear divisions of roles, and free-riders (Bovaird, 2007; Taylor, 1995). Joshi and Moore (2004) suggest that where coproduction occurs, power, authority and control of resources are likely to be dividing factors. Thus, the success of any coproduction endeavour is highly political and requires the balance of representative and participative collective democracy, and professional expertise to engage in coproduction processes (Bovaird, 2007). Coproduction is a socially constructed process in which multiple stakeholders agree to commit resources and energies in exchange for commitments from other partners. This calls for self-organised and self-checking systems for negotiating appropriate partnership rules and norms (Bovaird, 2006). If not designed under explicit rules

and values, coproduction may suffer from conflicting values and imbalanced power relations, leading to undesirable partnership outcomes. It thus follows that effective coproduction should be designed under a model that does not allow one single actor to dominate the partnership.

Additionally, the state has defined and often rigid ways of producing and managing urban society through its application of knowledge, political economy, rules and laws. Foucault (1982) regards state power as a crucial field of strategic action and connects it to issues of capitalist political economy (Lemke, 2000). As such, Foucault regards “government as the conduct of conduct” (Lemke, 2000:2). Thus, the state has the capacity to structure and shape the field of possible action of other partners in a coproduction endeavour (Foucault, 1982). To counter this, it is proper to proactively restrict the apparatus of the state so as to curtail the display of what I consider as ‘excessive governmentality’ from dominating non-state partners.

Grassroots coproduction is also vulnerable to strategic power games which may result in some partners, especially those with resources, determining the conduct of others leading to a state of domination and further marginalisation of the urban poor (Lemke, 2000). Nevertheless, Power as strategic games could result in an ‘empowerment’ or ‘responsibilisation’ of weaker partners, like the urban poor, forcing them to ‘free’ decision-making in fields of action (Lemke, 2000; Lemke, 2007). Thus, cases of coproduction where communities are truly empowered to take charge of their local development activities with professional advice can truly be emancipating for the urban poor. However, such a promise of coproduction is often drawn into question in cases especially where planning is fundamentally a ‘state apparatus’. In such cases, the state struggles to move away from traditional-rational-technical means of urban planning and governance, and would often want to control other partners in any coproduction endeavour (Pal, 2006). Further, hierarchical NGOs and associations which capitalise on the urban poor to champion a narrow and selfish causes “are not likely to create the sort of psychological and moral pre-conditions that generate the social capital considered a pre-condition” for deep democracy necessary for effective coproduction (Pal, 2006:514; Rudolph, 2000). These challenges are often enhanced if communities are passive and fragmented, hence, lacking capacity to build social capital needed to form alliances required for holding planning powers at neighbourhood scale (Pal, 2006).

Grassroots coproduction provides the frame where different rationalities come into clear juxtaposition, with subsequent engagement and contestation with each other, where further conflict is generated, or where contentious and political issues are ‘rendered technical’ by the state, or where real gains are secured by marginalised urban population groups (Watson, 2012). Li (2007: 11) uses “Foucault’s term of ‘permanent provocation’ to explain the interface, where there is ‘reciprocal appeal’: a ‘perpetual linking’ and a ‘perpetual reversal’, or as Li (2007) says: the relationship between the practice of government and the practice of politics” (Watson, 2012: 96). The overarching characteristic of the considered SDI successful cases of coproduction is that the urban poor are not mere recipients and subjects of power being exercised over them by the state and the NGOs (Pal, 2006; Zunino, 2006). This approach resonates with Giddens’ (1979) call for restraint on the part of the state, NGOs, planners and cognate professionals from abusing their resources to dominate the poor. There appears to exist an undertone that grassroots coproduction is at the risk of suffering from a sort of underlying power configuration which would allow certain agents to use resources to achieve pre-defined ends such as gaining political advantage.

#### **2.4. Conclusion**

This chapter has argued that coproduction is a policy concept which involves active interaction of various institutions such as government agencies, non-governmental organisations, politicians, community residents and community leaders. The concept is increasingly being used in the global South as an alternative approach to urban planning for equitable and sustainable urban informal settlement upgrading. Whereas top-down coproduction is devoid of power as a central factor, grassroots coproduction as practiced by SDI is cognisant of the role of power in determining institutional dynamics. With the help of case studies, the chapter has also established that grassroots coproduction provides the means to advance access to goods and services to improve the living conditions of urban populations in informal settlements. Having reviewed the concept of coproduction and its application in settlement upgrading, the following chapter presents the research methodology for this research.



## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0. Overview**

This study uses the case study research method to examine the institutional dynamics of coproduction processes in the Langrug informal settlement upgrade programme. The study is designed as a descriptive and interpretive inquiry analysed through qualitative methods. This chapter is divided into six sections. In the first section, in relation to this study, I explain case study research method. I use the second section to argue out the suitability of case research for the topic. Further, I use the third section to explain data collection and data analysis instruments, procedures and processes. In the fourth section, I explore the scope and limitations of the research methodology. I use the fifth section to explain how I have countered the problems to ensure research validity. I use the last section to provide a conclusion on this chapter and to introduce the next chapter. The following section explains case study research method.

### **3.1. Case study method**

Case study method involves the analysis of a unit which defines the minimum level of study. Thus, the method was used to do intensive analysis of Langrug informal settlement upgrading programme in order to understand how the existing institutional framework influences the settlement upgrading processes (Stake, 2008). In this case, the study investigated whether the current institutional framework doing settlement upgrading in Langrug allows partnering institutions and organisations to make substantial contributions towards the joint upgrading initiative. Further, the case study method involves rigorous and exhaustive analysis of both the unit of analysis and specific study elements occurring and influencing the phenomenon under investigation (Zainal, 2007). Thus, the method was used to analyse the context and the institutional interface created by NGOs, local government, academics, community members and civic leaders working jointly to improve the living conditions of people living in Langrug.

Of particular interest, a case study method documents and analyses a given unit in relation to environmental factors. Environmental factors in this case refer to the case study's concern with understanding various institutional factors that affect their active participation in settlement upgrading processes (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Accordingly, the research analysed actor participation in relation to local context and institutional framework (Flyvbjerg, 2011; Flyvbjerg, 2001). As such, the method used Langrug as a unit of analysis while individual elements like type and quantity of contribution, degree of participation and involvement in

decision making were considered as subjects of analysis (Zainal, 2007). Through detailed contextual analysis of the current institutional framework and the existing relationships and power dynamics among the programme partners, case research was useful for investigating the existing settlement upgrading initiative as a contemporary real-life phenomenon. Thus, this case study functioned as “an empirical inquiry that investigated a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context” (Yin, 1994; 2003: 13; Gerring, 2004).

Further, the case study method is more appropriate for answering qualitative research topics by seeking to answer ‘what’, ‘how’ and ‘why’ context bounded research questions (Yin, 2003). The method was appropriate to answer the research question at hand because the format of the research required a deep interrogation of the context and a more nuanced understanding of coproduction as an emerging model of informal settlement upgrading and urban development thought. The inquiry analysed the programme’s framework for partner participation, decision making and service delivery in Langrug (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Yin (2003) recommends that case study research method is appropriate for such studies in that the investigation addressed the ‘what’ question over a contemporary phenomenon occurring within a real-life context bounded by the official functional boundaries. Having elucidated what a case study is, the following section discusses the suitability of case study research method for this research topic.

### **3.3. Suitability of case study research method: The research paradigm**

The choice of case study research method is based on the understanding that planning is a value-laden activity. Thus, enhanced understanding of planning activities and settlement upgrading processes should be grounded in interpretivist and realist paradigms (Krauss, 2005). Further, the research report is a product of the interaction between the researcher and research participants and as such, it is value cognizant and is conscious of the values of human systems (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Krauss, 2005). The interpretive paradigm is premised on the belief that reality should consist of people’s subjective experiences and thus, adopts an inter-subjective epistemology and the ontological belief that reality is socially constructed (Krauss, 2005; Dobson, 2002). Dobson (2002) agrees that our knowledge of reality is a result of social conditioning and, thus, cannot be understood independently of the social actors involved in the knowledge derivation process. Realism concerns multiple perceptions about a single reality (Healy & Perry, 2000). Walsham (1993) agrees that interpretivists and realists attempt to derive their constructs from the field by an in-depth examination of the phenomenon of interest. Reeves and Hedberg (2003: 32) maintain that

“the interpretivist paradigm stresses the need to put analysis in context”. Creswell (1994) is of the view that such studies demand gathering ‘deep’ information through inductive qualitative research methods. “In the interpretive approach, the researcher does not stand above or outside, but is a participant observer” (Carr & Kemmis, 1986: 88) who engages in the activities and discerns the meanings of actions as they are expressed within specific social contexts. Case study method and semi-structured in-depth interviews prove to be rigorous, useful and appropriate for such inquiries (Krauss, 2005).

Case study research method was capable of and suitable for producing “concrete and context-dependent ideas” on the application of coproduction in informal settlement upgrading and urban planning. The method “facilitated practical interpretations and utility” of the findings to state recommendations for further refinement and scaling-up of the initiative (Flyvbjerg, 2011: 301). Context-dependent knowledge and experiences are at the very heart of urban planning activity in the global South where planning professionals are grappling to achieve meaningful transformation of fragmented and polarised cities (Watson, 2002; Flyvbjerg, 2006). In this case, context based understanding of coproduction processes using case study research produced concrete case ideas, rendering the approach more valuable than the vain search for predictive planning theories and universals (Flyvbjerg, 2006). This method also guided the development of an explanation for the flaws and strengths of the current institutional framework, which in turn provided an insight in defining actual power relations and partner responsibilities.

Further, the case study method grounds the inquiry into the ‘lived reality’ of both the research topic and questions. Accordingly, the method enabled the study to focus on the operational ways and experiences of individual organisations and institutions and how the current institutional framework is affecting their active participation processes in the programme. Thus, case study method is an inquiry that retains more of the ‘noise’ of real-life than any other research strategy for such inquiries (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001). The major advantage of case study method for this study was its ability to ‘close-in’ on real-life situations and on how the upgrading processes and activities unfold in context-specific realities and bounded practice (Flyvbjerg, 2011). The lived reality provided multiple sources of evidence and offered possibilities for covering multiple realities, giving case study its unwavering justifications for its appropriateness in this bounded inquiry (Jones & Lyons, 2004).

Above and beyond, in a case study, unusual stories and revelations are useful and contribute to essential policy recommendations that can result in tangible changes in the way coproduction is handled in Langrug and other cognate potential settlement upgrading initiatives in Stellenbosch. Similarly, the method was used to illuminate the ways in which coproduction and institutional frameworks are related to sustainable informal settlement upgrading and inclusive urban development (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001). Case research proved applicable for revealing processes involved in causal relationships between the phenomena under study. By so doing, case study research method facilitated a deeper understanding of a complex issue of coproduction and added strength to what is already known through previous research and current theory in urban planning (Susan, 1997). The following section identifies and elucidates on the research techniques that I have applied for data collection and analysis (Mouton & Prozesky, 2011).

### **3.4.0. Research techniques**

#### **3.4.1. Secondary data collection**

Secondary data was gathered from a number of sources which included inter alia, journal articles, books, organisation brochures and the internet.

#### **3.4.2. Primary data collection**

Primary data was gathered from field work that took place in May and June 2013. The researcher undertook over seven visits to Langrug informal settlement, Stellenbosch Municipality and the SDI/CORC offices in Mowbray of Cape Town. Primary data was collected mainly using semi-structured interviews which were supplemented by filed notes and observations.

#### **3.4.3. Data collection technique: Semi-structured interviews**

This subsection focuses on semi-structured interviews as a method used for collecting primary data to answer the research question. Semi-structured interviews are a non-standardised tool for data collection in qualitative research. Interviews as a systematic way of talking and listening to people are a way to collect data from individuals through conversation (Kajornboon, 2006). Thus, interviewing as a process was used as a way of collecting data as well as to gain knowledge of individual participants in the research. Kvale (1996) regards interviews as an interchange of views between people on a topic of mutual interest with the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production and emphasises the situatedness of the research data. In this case study, interviews allowed participants to get involved and talk about their views regarding the ways the existing institutional framework

affects coproduction processes and Langrug community improvement. The researcher asked questions in a manner that sought to motivate the respondents to give full and precise replies to questions while “avoiding biases stemming from social desirability, conformity or other constructs of disinterest” (Hoyle, Harris, & Judd, 2002: 144).

In-depth interviews based on semi-structured questions were asked to a sample of 15 respondents drawn from different institutions which were dubbed the implementing organisations. The researcher listed key themes, issues and questions to be covered during the interaction. Corbetta (2003: 270) explains semi-structured interviews as “the order in which the various topics in a research are dealt with and the wording of the questions are left to the interviewer’s discretion”. The researcher had the chance to add explanations and asked for clarifications whenever the response was not clear and this facilitated quality data acquisition. This kind of interaction prompted the respondent to elucidate further where necessary while allowing the researcher to establish a style of conversation needed to excite full disclosure of the information pertinent for answering the research question (David & Sutton, 2004). Hence, the use of semi-structured interviews yielded a purposeful and detailed discussion between the researcher and the respondent and this facilitated a smooth and effective collection of valid and reliable data relevant to our research question. The technique was used as a source of stories and context to enable comprehensive data generation. In this way, the technique became a platform for reality-construction and meaning making occasions during data collection process. Such applications of the technique resonates with Roulston, deMarrais, & Lewis (2003) description of interviews as a site where interviewees and interviewers construct data for a research project. The following subsection describes the sampling process of research participants and the main research questions.

#### **3.4.5. Sampling process and sample size**

The study had a total of 15 respondents drawn from active programme partners. The participants were selected in a purposive way so as to get individuals who were actively involved in the partnership activities. Thus, working with Langrug Community Leadership (LCL), SDI and CORC as key mobilisers in this partnership, the researcher prepared a list of all organisations that were part of the partnership. Further, LCL, SDI and CORC assisted the researcher to identify active programme institutional partners. Preceding interviews, the researcher visited Langrug settlement, SDI/CORC offices and had telephonic conversations and electronic mail exchanges with the ward councillor and key officials in the Department of Informal Settlements at the Stellenbosch Municipality. These visits and conversations were

meant to guide the researcher to identify people that later represented these institutions during interviews. Later, the researcher picked a total of 15 individuals with considerable involvement in the Langrug settlement upgrade programme to represent the selected organisations during the interview process. Of the 15 research participants, the researcher independently identified 12 while those from the Federation of the Urban Poor (FEDUP) and two of the four respondents from the community were identified by CORC/SDI and LCL respectively. Despite being listed as one of the programme partners, the School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics (APG) at the University of Cape Town (UCT) and Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) were omitted from the interview list. This was justified by the fact that these academic institutions were no longer active partners at the time of the study. The 15 research participants were drawn from the organisations and institutions as follows:

1. Community residents: 4
2. Community leaders: 2
3. Municipality of Stellenbosch: 2
4. Slum/Shack Dwellers International: 1
5. Community Organisation Resource Centre (CORC): 1
6. Informal Settlement Network (ISN): 1
7. Ward councillor: 1
8. Savings groups: 2
9. Federation of the urban poor: 1

#### **3.4.6.1. Research question**

What lessons can we learn from the institutional arrangements of participatory informal settlement upgrading programme in Langrug?

#### **3.4.6.2. Subsidiary research questions**

- i. What institutional framework carries out the settlement upgrading processes?
- ii. What role does each of the partners play in the entire settlement upgrading process?
- iii. What mechanisms are put in place to ensure substantial contributions by all partners?
- iv. What key issues inform the vision of participatory settlement upgrading in Langrug?
- v. How does the programme address the issues of sustainability and continuity?

- vi. What challenges and strengths characterise Langrug settlement upgrading programme?
- vii. How unusual is the Langrug informal settlement upgrading initiative?
- viii. How do power and politics influence the partnership and the settlement upgrading process?

#### **3.4.7. Data analysis: meaning making**

Following the completion of each day's interview set, the researcher transcribed the tapes within 72 hours after the interview. The transcription process helped the researcher to think about what the interviewees were saying and how they were saying it regarding the research questions. All the research participants spoke in English; hence, the researcher did not have any language-related problems during and after the interview process. Each written transcript was read several times while listening to the corresponding audio tape to ensure accuracy and to achieve a better overall understanding of each participant's experiences in the upgrading programme. As recommended by Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2007), the process of transcribing and listening guided the researcher in uncovering the thematic aspects of the research findings. Later, the analysis of the transcribed data and derived themes involved selective reading where the text was read several times and statements that appeared to be revealing the subject and aspect under inquiry was underlined. Next, the researcher selected the highlighted themes, phrases and sentences and related such statements to the context and the field notes so as to capture as fully as possible what meaning the highlighted material was conveying. Following the initial readings and preliminary identification of themes in each of the interviews, the researcher compared the themes in each interview, while looking for commonalities and differences, in order to identify the overall themes that would best describe the experiences of the participants in the Langrug programme. With the themes identified, as indicated by Juliet and Strauss (1990), the researcher then begun the process of writing the themes and explaining their relationship. The next section explicates methodological scope and limitations.

### **3.5. Methodological scope and limitations**

#### **3.5.1. The case study method**

Despite having credible strengths, the case study method is challenged on issues associated with research objectivity. Case investigators are likely to be sloppy and allow the equivocal evidence to influence the direction of the findings (Yin, 1994; 2003). "Case study method contains a bias toward verification, the tendency to confirm the researcher's preconceived

notions and this renders the study to be of less scientific value” (Flyvbjerg, 2011: 309). The other weakness of case study method is that it is often difficult to summarise the data and develop a general preposition and theory on the basis of specific case studies (Flyvbjerg, 2011). In this study, akin to Flyvbjerg (2011), the method has generated data and information that is not generalizable in the conventional sense. By definition, the research question can make no claim of being typical and applicable to all other coproduction arrangements in informal settlement upgrading programmes in other South African cities. Other local authorities may have different municipal policies on how to collaboratively deal with informal settlements. Furthermore, the data sought by the research question cannot claim universality and generality as it is not representative of a large population and cases across a wider region like the entire Western Cape (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001). Based on these weaknesses of the method used, the findings may be of little policy value outside Stellenbosch. However, the method is useful for generating generalizable concepts and prepositions that can be tested and applied in other global South cities where coproduction is happening. Thus, the value of the case research method is not in generalising context but in the principles that characterise a particular research phenomenon. In addition to the above limitations, the method also demanded the researcher to collect and store multiple sources of evidence in a comprehensive and systematic way so that converging lines of inquiry, themes and patterns could be uncovered (Susan, 1997). While strengthening the case study, this large amount of work and detailed processes made the study demanding in terms of labour, finances and time (Smith, 1987).

### **3.5.2. Challenges encountered during interviews**

As cautioned by Roulston, deMarrais and Lewis (2003), the interview process faced a number of challenges. Key among them included unexpected participant behaviours such as failure to be ready for interviews on time, answering phone calls and limited attention during the interview process, and offering limited time for interviews. Other challenges which however were not very prominent in this study include biases, subjectivities and pop up of sensitive issues that bordered on race and politics. By prolonging the interviews period, these challenges hampered smooth data collection and increased the cost of the research. Further, as observed by Susan (1997), research participants contradicted with one another on a number of issues and this made data analysis challenging and time consuming (Kvale, 1996).



### **3.6. Research validity: Countering methodological challenges**

#### **3.6.1. Case study method**

Stake (2008) suggests that case research needs to be organised around situated issues so as to strengthen the research strategy. As such, programme and context referenced questions on the extent of participation, savings schemes, funding mechanisms, decision making, power relations and the role of politics strengthened and deepened the theme of the study. The researcher, while working as an observer, explored and took field notes on meanings of informative verbal and non-verbal interview responses, and related them to contexts and experiences of individual research participants. This worked to strengthen the single case, hence, contributing valid ideas and prepositions on coproduction processes in informal settlement upgrading and urban planning. Further, the utility of this case study report, though aiming to make sense in similar environments, is in its “extension of experience” (Stake, 1994: 245). For that reason, the findings are grounded in interpretivist and realist paradigms so as to make sense based on environmental similarity and not generalisations based on baseless and context-less arguments as truth lies in particulars.

To ensure objectivity and validity, akin to Yin (2003), the researcher applied three remedies to construct validity and avoid biases: the study triangulated the data sources (see list of research participants) as a means to counter interviewee’s and the researcher’s bias at all levels of the study. Secondly, going by Yin’s (2003) advice, transcribed notes were sent for review by selected key informants among them, Municipality of Stellenbosch, the councillor and SDI/CORC. Thirdly, data was subjected to and assessed against existing theory and practice of the main research theme as presented under the chapter for literature review. Furthermore, strategies such as categorical aggregation, and pattern matching were applied to reduce the volume of the data and focus on the categories and aggregates for interpretation (Runkel, 1990; Yin, 2003).

#### **3.6.2. Ethical and remedies to challenges during the interview process**

In conducting interviews, ethical issues such as confidentiality, were given respect whenever sought by the interviewee. Data that would potentially harm the research participant has been omitted or presented anonymously and anything of a devious or derogatory nature has been avoided by the researcher (Gray, 2004). In addition, a full explanation of the purpose of the research was made before the interviews so that the respondent could make an informed decision to be a participant and also avoid releasing information that may be damaging to him or her. Any material promises and reciprocity behaviour were avoided so as to achieve

objectivity from the respondents. Before the interview, informed consent was sought and recorded from the respondents so that the research is done according to the etiquettes demanded by the fundamentals of good research (Kajornboon, 2006). Above all, the researcher will make the final research report available to SDI, CORC, Langrug community and to the Municipality of Stellenbosch. In the following section, I provide a summary of the chapter and introduce the chapter on the policy environment.

### **3.7. Conclusion**

This chapter has explained the methodology of the research. The chapter has discussed case research method and its application in this research. In addition, the chapter has outlined sources of data, data collection instruments and data analysis procedures applied in this research. The chapter has further explained the strengths and limitations of the case research method in interrogating the research question. The chapter has equally elucidated a number of strategies used to counter the methodological challenges to ensure research validity. Having presented the research methodology, the following chapter provides a review of policies and legal provisions on housing and settlements.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: POLICY REVIEW ON SETTLEMENT UPGRADING**

### **4.0. Overview**

The impact of South Africa's history of socio-political control which was exercised through the state-driven and racially discriminating policy of apartheid will continue to influence the relationship between state, citizenship and space. In 1913, the Native's Land Act was published and it remains a searing indictment that nullified long-standing claims of a majority black population to land, shelter and economic self-sufficiency (Bradlow, 2013). Today, it is estimated that "over 1.1 million households live in informal shelter in over 2,600 informal settlements in the nine major cities of South Africa" (Del Mistro & Hensher, 2009: 333). In 2009, South African cities became the terrain of violent protests and protestors were vocal in demanding basic services and houses (Etzo, 2010). Seeking to provide a policy context for Langrug coproduction activities, this chapter reviews post-1994 approaches and policies on informal settlements in South Africa. The chapter is divided into eight sections. In the first section, I provide a brief background of urban settlement and housing interventions prior to the dawn of democracy. In the second section, I discuss the immediate government responses to housing and settlement crises after 1994. Thirdly, I discuss the 1996 South African constitution and the 1997 Housing Act regarding the realisation of fundamental human rights. In the fourth section, I review the Breaking New Grounds policy and its implications on settlement interventions. I use section five to discuss public participation accompanying these policies and laws. In section six, I review settlement and housing policies and plans formulated by the Municipality of Stellenbosch. Using section seven, I provide an explanation for continued despondency among the urban indigents amidst fairly good laws and policies. In the final section, I draw a conclusion on this chapter and introduce the next chapter. The following section discusses the legacies of apartheid settlement interventions.

### **4.1. The legacies of apartheid housing and settlement interventions**

Constitutionally, apartheid policy divided South Africa into 'white' and 'black'. White South Africa consisted mainly of serviced and planned urban areas, while black South Africa was mainly poorly serviced urban and rural areas (Marais, 2005). State sponsored housing and settlement interventions like the hostels for migrant workers, the establishment of dormitory towns, and forced relocations of families to residential areas classified by race form part of the long lasting memories of apartheid policy (Del Mistro & Hensher, 2009). It is worth noting that these housing projects were located in areas that lacked adequate commercial and community facilities. Further, there was "state sanctioned drive for the eradication of communities and relocation of families under the guise of slum clearance" and the provision

of rental housing stocks to house 'migrant' workers (Del Mistro & Hensher, 2009:334). After the repeal of the Influx Control Act, the apartheid regime established site and service areas to accommodate the surging numbers of black people migrating to cities in the 1980s and early 1990s (Del Mistro & Hensher, 2009). By 1994, South African cities were already struggling with a deep crisis in both housing and public services as growth of informal settlements deepened. Responding to the crisis, the democratic government of 1994 pursued with urgency only one option in the form of a fully serviced house with freehold title (Del Mistro & Hensher, 2009). The next section discusses settlement interventions that were devised and vigorously pursued under the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP).

#### **4.2. The RDP housing programme: Why so much reproach?**

In 1994, the post-apartheid government inherited a shelter crisis with approximately over 300 informal settlements. As a result, "the new government embarked on an ambitious programme to provide one million houses within the first five years in government" (Del Mistro & Hensher, 2009: 334; Landman & Napier, 2010; Parnell & Hart, 1999). The state introduced the RDP housing subsidy system which sought to undo the housing backlog by financing acquisition of houses for individual households. With such high backlogs, the RDP housing programme gobbled practically all the housing subsidy though housing supply never outstripped demand and appalling public services still instigated public protests. As such, from the onset, the programme falls short of being sustainable and does not appear to deliver the promise of hope to millions still subjected to squalor conditions in informal settlements in what I call the New South Africa.

Assessing the RDP programme reveals that the government has exceeded its quantum target of a million houses but as Huchzermeyer (2003:595) writes, "it has required the relocation of informal settlement households mainly to peripherally located standardised dormitory and housing developments". In the process, the programme has condemned millions into further socio-economic isolation and despondency. This is so because essential social and livelihood networks have been weakened and destroyed during and after relocations to new sites. The programme is equally criticised for being too state-centred with "the majority of subsidised housing development in South Africa since 1994 being project-linked and/or contractor driven" (Del Mistro & Hensher, 2009: 334; Huchzermeyer, 2006). Thus, the RDP-linked housing policy is criticised for encouraging individuals to 'sit back and wait for government to deliver' a house and a certificate of ownership. Additionally, meeting quantitative targets by government has not translated into positive elimination of informal settlements as millions

still live in despair. Thus, RDP is flawed in both scope and process and cannot be a sustainable policy frame for addressing the rising demand curve for pro-poor quality housing. In the next section, I discuss the 1996 constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA) and the 1997 Housing Act in relation to realising fundamental human rights.

#### **4.3.1. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996**

South Africa has had five constitutions over the years with the most inclusive and celebrated being the 1996 version (Currie & De Waal, 2005). The right to housing is enshrined in this version, and is phrased as ‘the right of access to adequate housing’ thus, guaranteeing the right to ‘adequate shelter’ for all citizens within available state resources (Landman & Napier, 2010). This section analyses the 1996 constitution of the Republic of South Africa. The analysis is cognisant that the Bill of Rights (BoR) is the basis of democracy in South Africa as it compels the state to respect, protect, promote and fulfil the fundamental rights of all South Africans (Tshikotshi, 2009; Republic of South Africa (RSA), 1996). As such, the constitution needs to be read together with the BoR as contained in Chapter 2 of the Constitution in order to appreciate notions of constitutional supremacy, justifiability and entrenchment of development action (Currie & de Waal, 2005). Further, it is noted that any law, policy or action which is inconsistent with the constitution is irrelevant whereas all the obligations imposed by it must comply with it (Mubangizi, 2005; RSA, 1996).

The Bill of Rights of the South African constitution ensures economic, social and cultural rights such as the access to housing, the right to safe environment, access to health and education, social security and property rights (RSA, 1996). These rights have vital social and economic dimensions because they safeguard access to basic services such as housing, water, food, security, health, education, safe environment by the urban poor households (Tshikotshi, 2009). Moreover, section 26 of the constitution identifies the right to basic needs, including protecting, fulfilling, promoting and respecting the right to housing by the urban poor. The constitution elaborates “that:

- (1) Everyone has the right to have access to adequate housing;
- (2) The state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of this right; and,
- (3) No one may be evicted from their home, or have their home demolished, without an order of court made after considering all of the relevant circumstances; the constitution stresses further that no legislation may permit arbitrary evictions” (RSA, 1996:12; Bradlow, 2013). Further, section 27 (1) (a) (b) and (c) endorses that each citizen has the right to access

adequate services such as health care, water and social security. Section 32 (1) (a) (b) and (2) guarantees the citizens' access to the right information held by anybody including the three spheres of the government which may be needed for the exercise or protection of human rights (RSA, 1996). These constitutional provisions provide an unquestionable basis for a holistic improvement of the lives of the urban indigents.

Additionally, section 24 (a) (b) sanctions the right to live in a suitable environment free of harm to health or well-being. It is contemplated that well-being is all-encompassing and includes both material and non-material aspects of human life. Besides, the law provides that the environment must be protected for the benefit of both the current and the future generations through appropriate application of rules to prevent pollution and environmental degradation, promote conservation and maintain ecological sustainability (RSA, 1996). Therefore, it is the responsibility of the state to protect and ensure liveable environments for all South Africans (Mubangizi, 2005). Sections 40 and 41 recognize the need for harmonious intergovernmental relations to ensure accountable and coherent governance across the country (RSA, 1996; Tshikotshi, 2009). Hence, the responsibility for ensuring safe and liveable environments for all rests on all the three spheres of government. Section 25 further affirms the rights of children vis-à-vis housing and commands that children should have access to shelter, basic health care services, basic nutrition, and social services (RSA, 1996). Despite these unambiguous constitutional provisions that echo ripples of hope for the urban poor, there is no city in South Africa that is free of deplorable informal settlements with vicious living conditions for millions. The following paragraphs expound legal and policy challenges that affect the realisation of a better life for all.

Firstly, the South African constitution and ensuing policies have failed to accommodate and deliver the four essential housing elements as identified by international conventions. The elements include respect, protect, fulfil and promote the right to housing by the urban poor (Tshikotshi, 2009). The constitution does not order government to compensate its failures in achieving adequate housing for the poor (Tshikotshi, 2009). Thus, often times, government has not demonstrated that all the available resources have been exhausted and that government has genuinely failed to cater for the needs of those who are in dire need of housing and settlement services (Tshikotshi, 2009). Further, the realization of the right to housing is inextricably linked to the right to land. However, the right to land is habitually constrained by the constitutional protection of the exceptionally lopsided existing property

rights to land (Tshikotshi, 2009; Huchzermeyer, 2003; RSA, 1998). Huchzermeyer (2003) debates that the invasion of land by the urban poor should be interpreted as an indication that access to housing for the urban indigents is connected to inequitable access to land.

Analysing international human rights norms in relation to the South African legal system, it is obvious that the execution of some human rights norms through the national legal procedures is challenging. Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) (2005: 26) laments that “South African urban policy environment has failed to cater for the urban poor households waiting in the queue for low-income housing”. In cases where attempts have been made to provide pro-poor housing, the poor are subjected to depriving and isolating environments mostly positioned in peripheral locations which lack requisites for reasonable human development (Tshikotshi, 2009). The true scenario in South Africa is that housing policy and settlement upgrading programmes are linked to principles of adequate housing but do not take into account the notions of suitability and affordability by the urban poor (Tshikotshi, 2009). Thus, while the constitution is undoubtedly inspiring, there are wider gaps between theory and sound practice as the urban poor continue to operate at the lowest level of economic capacity and lack the skill to challenge the political and legal status quo (Tshikotshi, 2009). The urban poor lack basic understanding of legal jargon and processes and this compromises their livelihood strategies as they find it challenging to know their rights sufficient enough for them to take decisive civic decisions (Tshikotshi, 2009). In the following subsection, I discuss the Housing Act No. 107 of 1997.

#### **4.3.2. The South African Housing Act No. 107 of 1997**

Housing law is very complex as it involves networks of laws, policies, economics and planning matters. The Housing Act of 1997 remains influential regarding housing and settlement interventions in South Africa. The Act is based on the South African Housing White Paper and the Botshabelo Accord, both of 1994, which remain the bedrock of all housing policies and legislations (Tshikotshi 2009). The Act and the National Housing Code are intended to give effect to the state’s duties enshrined in the constitution of 1996 (RSA, 1997). Sections 2 to 4 of the Act provide the functions and responsibilities of the three spheres of government in prioritizing the needs of the poor with regard to housing development. Section 8 of the Act espouses housing policy that has seen housing being delivered to urban citizens earning less than R3 500 per month. The Act provides the foundation for housing policy and settlement upgrading as it recognizes housing as (a) a sufficient shelter to fulfil the basic needs, (b) a product and a process, (c) product of

endeavour and an enterprise, (c) an integrated developmental planning, (d) a significant sector of the economy, and (e) key to socio-economic well-being of the nation (RSA, 1997; Tshikotshi 2009). In addition, section 2 (iii) of the Act advocates “for the development, establishment and maintenance of communally and economically viable communities” to ensure safe and healthy living conditions and the elimination and prevention of informal settlements (RSA, 1997: 6). Further, the Act prescribes “principles defining housing development based on aspects of respect, protect, promote and fulfil housing rights for the urban indigents as demanded under the Bill of Rights while adhering to the principles of cooperative governance” (RSA, 1997:8). Thus, the 1997 Housing Act is an ambitious piece of legislation that aims to protect the housing rights of the poor.

However, the 1997 Housing Act has serious weaknesses such as the failure to direct housing policy on whether housing delivery should be through project-linked grants, settlement-wide developments, or individual ownership should be given precedence over communal ownership or rental alternatives (Tshikotshi, 2009). Besides, the Act does not uphold the spirit of democracy as it provides that the Housing Code is a preserve of the Housing Minister and, that the minister has the right not to engage in any consultative process in deciding national housing policy (Miraftab, 2003). This thinking is based on misconceptions that informal settlement intervention is simply a form of housing delivery and that the role of communities is to be dismissed (Huchzermeyer, 2003). Based on such weaknesses in the legal fraternity, subsidies have been offered often and ‘normally’ through top-down housing projects for large-scale housing settlements (COHRE, 2005). There are many problems associated with project-linked subsidised housing and these include inter alia, poor quality and peripheral locations that lack commercial and social services (Huchzermeyer, 2003). In this way, and owing to the fact that housing rights are bundled with livelihood rights, the Act, cannot facilitate housing innovations that can significantly and holistically improve the lives of the beneficiaries (Tshikotshi, 2009). Alas, it goes without saying that the right to housing means more than mere structure made of bricks and mortar with a certificate of ownership hanging on the wall.

Based on the 1997 Housing Act and other legal provisions, South Africa has seen a ‘mixed bag’ of measures meant to do away with informal settlements in the post-apartheid era. These measures are based on both direct and indirect approaches. Direct measures are embedded in legal policy on elimination and prevention of informal settlements (Tshikotshi, 2009). This



implies that direct approaches embody control measures which aim at the outcome instead of the cause. As such, the approach has seen repeated use of forceful means which violate the moral and constitutional imperatives that seek to safeguard livelihoods, right to adequate shelter and the right to safe and liveable environments. The authorities have deployed “coercive means such as evictions, forced relocations, criminalisation, arrests, and forceful prevention of the formation of new informal settlements” and this happens in a country where it is abundantly clear that informal settlements emerge out of the ever-deepening housing crisis (Huchzermeyer, 2008: 94). I argue that these direct approaches are identical to the measures adopted by the previous apartheid regime in its bid to eradicate informal settlements. Huchzermeyer (2008) maintains that direct interventions in informal settlements have swiftly found their way back into the post-apartheid South Africa, and despite contestation, have been incorporated into legislations in contradiction with indirect and positive approaches to settlement transformation. The direct approach cannot give any hope for both authorities and the urban poor to create efficient and inclusive South African urban societies.

The delivery of pro-poor housing based on the Housing Act of 1997 is also criticised by both academia and planning professionals. McLean (2006) identified four main criticisms associated with housing delivery during the first decade of South African democracy. For instance, peripheral housing location is scorned upon for adversely affecting the livelihoods of the beneficiaries as there are no accessible social services and job opportunities needed for sustainable community development, thus, creating mono-functional settlements that only serve to isolate the poor further (McLean, 2006). The challenges created by poor housing locations are enhanced by unavailability of affordable transport facilities which in turn limit accessibility and further constrain livelihoods as working beneficiaries often have to rent housing or set up temporary shacks close to places of work. This has colossal adverse effects with a possibility for a perverse effect of increasing the housing backlog. As such, the paradox of poor housing location as one of the means of addressing the challenges of informal settlements and housing backlog is illogical and perpetuates the legacy of apartheid (Tshikotshi, 2009). In addition, the quality of housing is awful as beneficiaries struggle to live normal lives during both winter and summer times of the year and some houses are not durable (McLean, 2006). Thus, the delivery of housing has not culminated into poverty alleviation and does not address the daunting challenge of joblessness (Tshikotshi, 2009). Rather, I argue that the approach has deepened poverty and debt as most beneficiaries

struggle to secure employment and income for transport, services and the on-going maintenance of houses. It is a glaring fact that the housing policy has failed to apply the concept of multiplier effect so as to utilise housing development to create liveable and mixed use pro-poor urban settlements (Atuahene, 2004).

The experiences and legacies of apartheid have to some degree influenced the thinking among the beneficiaries and the authorities to equate settlement upgrading to individual housing ownership. McLean (2006) reiterates that for many beneficiaries of subsidized housing, the vital thing is secure tenure. As a result, the approach narrowly focuses on individual ownership of freestanding homes as the only tenure security. Accordingly, progressive housing policies and settlement intervention approaches ought to deviate from the myopia of secure tenure to encompass other progressive options which adopt housing development as one of the many elements in improving the well-being of the urban indigents (McLean, 2006; Tshikotshi, 2009). Huchzermeyer (2003) insists that housing policies that focus on developer-built projects to house the poor best serve the interests of the elites and maintain the poverty status of the urban poor. However, South Africa has also seen a wave of indirect interventions in informal settlements. These involve positive measures which focus on improving living conditions within an informal settlement with greater emphasis on ensuring minimal disruptions to livelihoods and networks of settlement residents (Huchzermeyer, 2008; Tshikotshi, 2009). The indirect approaches to ‘eliminating’ informal settlements are legally provided for under section 2 (1) (iii) of the Housing Act. To further articulate the indirect approaches to settlement upgrading, the next section provides an analysis of the 2004 Breaking New Ground (BNG) policy.

#### **4.4. The Breaking New Ground (BNG) policy of 2004**

In 2004, the housing policy was revised to achieve a number of objectives that sought to among others “accelerate housing delivery as a strategy for poverty alleviation, advancing social cohesion and to use housing as an implement for the development of sustainable human settlements” (Department of Housing (DoH), 2004:7; Del Mistro & Hensher, 2009). The BNG builds on the 1997 Housing Act and seeks to create integrated but diverse communities with improved housing environments for the beneficiaries (DoH, 2004; Tshikotshi, 2009). Thus, the concept is to “stimulate the supply of a more diverse set of housing environment and settlement types, densities, locations, tenure options, housing credit and delivery routes” (DoH, 2004:8). Furthermore, the policy is inspired by and subscribes to the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) target of improving millions

of households living in informal settlements globally by 2020 (Department of Human Settlements (DoHS), 2009; Tshikotshi, 2009). The policy has the intention that informal settlements should be upgraded in-situ using a phased approach but rather upholds that households should relocate when development is not possible (DoH, 2004). Above all, the policy aims to maintain fragile community networks, minimise disruptions and enhance community participation (Del Mistro & Hensher, 2009).

The BNG policy also seeks to facilitate structured settlement upgrading approach that should be tackled from a pragmatic dimension premised on the changing realities and dynamics of informal settlements. It is recognised that sustainable settlement upgrading requires broad-based and long-term commitments that should involve a wide range of stakeholders (DoH, 2004; Tshikotshi, 2009). Thus, a key innovation of the BNG is its recognition of the need to refocus on in-situ and participatory measures in settlement upgrading (Bradlow, 2013). In this regard, the BNG provides for the Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme (UISP), which is contained within Chapter 3 of the National Housing Code and supports a comprehensive housing development approach that embodies elements like tenure security, health and safety, and empowerment of the urban households (Bradlow, 2013; Tshikotshi, 2009; DoH, 2004). The UISP is based on in-situ methodologies which are described as global best practice (DoH, 2004). Section 13.2.2 of the BNG emphasises UISP principles which include inter alia, a holistic approach, qualification for benefits, community participation, stand sizes, suitability of land, demolition of shacks and an articulation on how to realise the doctrine of cooperative governance (Tshikotshi, 2009; DoH, 2004). Furthermore, section 13.3.4.1 outlines the four application phases with a mandatory requirement for interim municipal services during the initial phase (Huchzermeyer, 2005; DoH, 2004a). By prescribing principles and upgrade phases, the BNG is credited for its pragmatism and for its deviation from project-driven and state-centred settlement upgrading. The UISP is also commended on the basis that it discourages irrational relocations and displacement of families. The programme recognises that most households living in informal settlements are dependent on fragile networks to warrant their livelihoods and survival (Tshikotshi, 2009). As such, the programme seeks to reduce disruption of the affected communities and only recommends for relocations when it is really unavoidable and warranted by cases where households live in risky conditions or in areas that may require excessive engineering works (Tshikotshi, 2009). In such cases, negotiated relocations should take place at a location as close as possible to the existing settlement (DoH, 2004).

However, Huchzermeyer (2008) and COHRE (2005) note with concern the use of the term ‘eradication’ of informal settlements in the BNG policy document. Eradication or elimination connotes some use of force to wipe out all informal settlements from the face of South Africa cities. McLean (2006) insists that despite the adoption of the BNG since 2004, the urban poor are still being housed in project-linked housing developments located on the urban outskirts. In addition, the implementation of the BNG prioritises social housing and seeks to enhance mobility and advancement of urban integration while tackling the duality of urban property markets. Nonetheless, social housing is expensive as the costs are often borne out by benefactors and this ultimately creates uncertainty and non-sustainability in the social housing sector (Tshikotshi, 2009). This ultimately means that the BNG is not a panacea for the current settlement challenges afflicting the urban poor in South Africa.

While the BNG policy is commended for demonstrating ingenuity and being responsive to the local challenges affecting informal settlements, Goebel (2007: 292) debates that “South Africa’s settlement upgrading activities reveal a temporal trend of unsustainability and do not epitomise much promise for improving the lives of the urban poor”. This is so because the adoption of the neo-liberal macro-economic policies by the government, particularly the approval of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy in 1996 has increased the gap between the rich and the poor. A rift has been created between the need for reconstruction and redistribution and the neo-liberal macro-economic policy (Etzo, 2010). As the rhetoric of ‘a better life for all’ reverberates in the political discourse, GEAR expressed a market-driven vision of development that relied on growth as its driving force. The GEAR was, for many critics, a betrayal of the precepts of the RDP. Its critics, for example the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), perceived a shift in emphasis from development to growth, from radical transformation to a conservative, neo-liberal agenda which is criticised for its negative consequences for redistribution. Worse still, the GEAR’s main objective to increase employment opportunities failed to materialize (Reitzes, 2009). Critics further argue that neo-liberal policy has worsened poverty levels of the already urban disadvantaged households as they cannot meet the cost of a healthy urban living environment (Goebel, 2007). Giving in to the opposing voices, the government realised that those who are relatively less disadvantaged are more able to take advantage of economic growth than those who need it the most (South African Presidency, 2008). Thus, in 2004, there was another shift in macro-economic policy, signalling a retreat from the aggressive neo-liberal GEAR phase. In his State of the Nation address in May 2004, President Mbeki articulated policies

that included an increase in government spending, deceleration of privatization, extending the social security net, and the expansion of the Public Works Programme (PWP) (Hart, 2006). This address signified a movement towards the idea of South Africa as a developmental state (Reitzes, 2009).

From 2005 onwards, the notion of a 'developmental state' increasingly arose in policy discourse. Policy documents from the African National Congress (ANC)'s 2007 conference explicitly address the nature of a developmental state (Turok, 2008; Reitzes, 2009). Despite these policy efforts to address inequality and poverty challenges, persistent inequality in income, resources, skills and other determinants of people's ability and capacity to exploit opportunities remains widespread in all South African cities and towns (Reitzes, 2009). Thus, the dream for ecologically and socio-economically sustainable urban settlements remains, for the most part and for the moment, a distant dream among many urban poor South Africans (Tshikotshi, 2009). Although section 24 of the 1996 South African constitution is categorical on the right to sustainable environments, the country still experiences environmental discrimination with a clear divide between the poor and wealthy neighbourhoods (Mubangizi, 2005). It is undeniable that rubbish collection is more coherent and predictable in affluent areas but rare and unreliable in informal settlements. The next section discusses the idea and practice of public participation as experienced in South Africa.

#### **4.5.1. Conceptualisation and practice of public participation: Actualisation of policies**

Most of the laws and policies promulgated by the South African national government are implemented by local governments. Accordingly, municipalities articulate their commitment towards the idea and practice of public participation. Public participation is seen by municipalities as key to ensuring that municipalities are responsive to the needs of communities (Njenga, 2009). Municipalities endeavor "to make public participation an integral part of the planning, budgeting and service delivery processes, and to ensure sensitivity and responsiveness to community needs" (Masango, 2002: 62). Municipalities acknowledge in their plans and frameworks that public participation has the potential to improve their capacity to deliver according to the expectation of the public. However, most of the local authorities lack dynamic mechanisms to actualise the fairly good policies and laws through effective public participation.

#### **4.5.2. Organisational structures and mechanisms: Facilitation of public participation**

One of the ways to promote effective public participation in the policy process is by “organizing for participation and putting in place structures and forums around government matters” Masango (2002: 62). South African legislation requires that Ward Committees should be the main structures for public participation in the public policy discourse (Department of Provincial and Local Government (DoPLG), 1998; Davids, 2005). Ward councillors are expected to enable communities in their respective ‘geographical areas’ to participate in the formulation and implementation of government policies and plans (Njenga, 2009). This is envisaged to happen through community-based planning at ward level. This kind of planning requires functional Ward Committees that develop plans for their own wards, and link ward priorities to the integrated development planning of the municipality. However, public participation through Ward Committees suffers from many challenges such as dysfunctional or absence of Ward Committees and politicisation of participation processes (Njenga, 2009). The overall implication and reality has been that communities in Stellenbosch and other municipalities in South Africa are not given a fair chance in their geographic areas to engage meaningfully with these policies (Masango, 2002; Njenga, 2009).

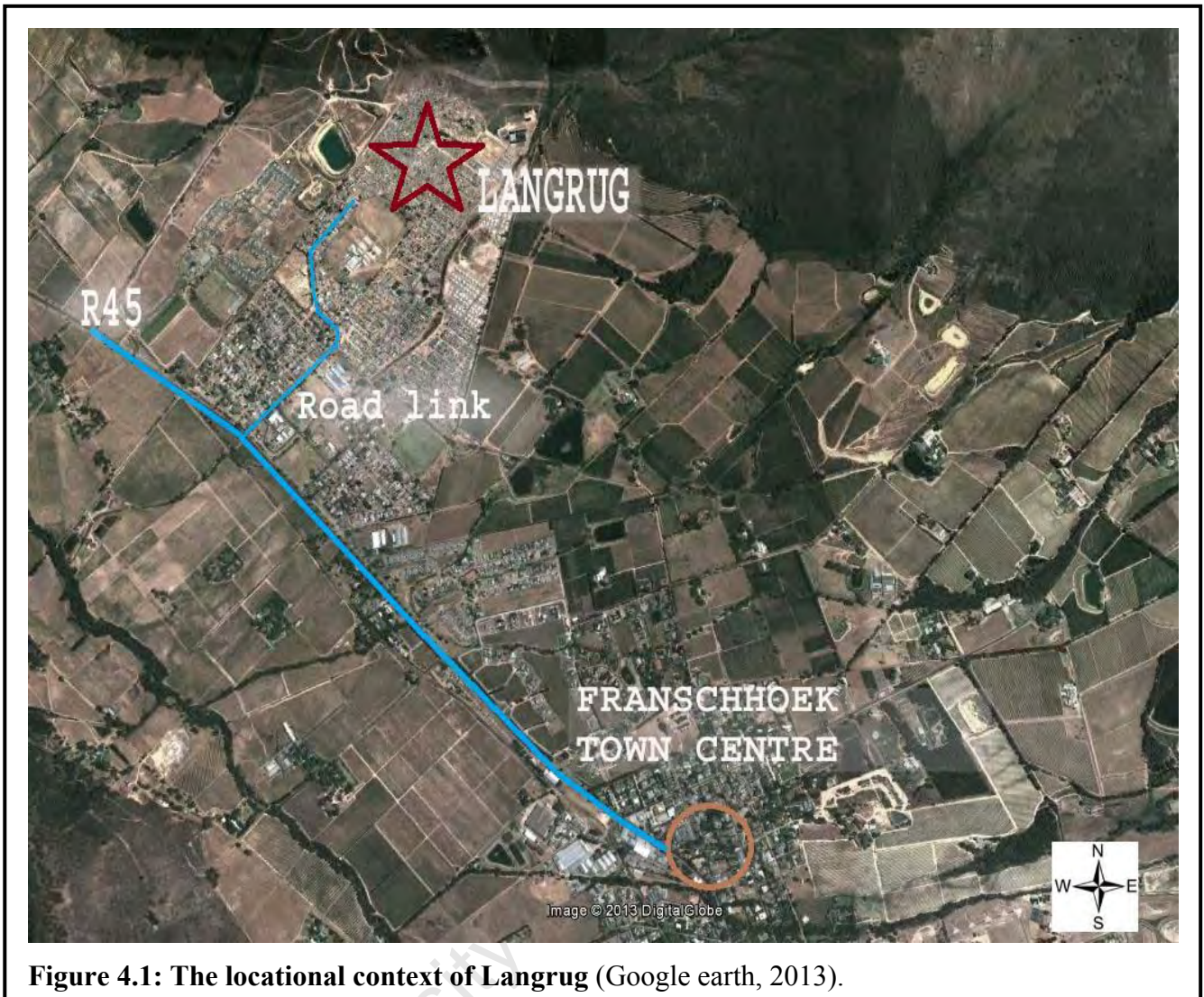
If public participation in any policy process is to succeed, participants must have power to influence decisions and be in charge of their development. Kakonge (1999) reports that the involvement and participation of the local people in any development process in South Africa leaves much to be desired. It appears that the South African planning system is fixated in what Stardahl, Zakaria, Dewar and Panich (2004: 3) describe as “legitimatising participation where the sole purpose of the participatory process is to legitimate the development process”, but does not have much influence on shaping policy implementation and community development. In addition, South African planning system does not go beyond instrumental participation in which the public is utilised as mere information providers to improve the quality of government designed development plans and frameworks. South African state-community engagement processes in development planning do not embrace democratic participation where the views and priorities of the public are practically taken into account in the development processes (Stardahl, Zakaria, Dewar, & Panich, 2004). It appears the focus is so much on getting buy-in from stakeholders through mere consultation. Municipalities lack mechanisms that would encourage critical debate on settlement development issues. Further, there is no deliberate form of participatory mechanisms for urban marginalized people to effectively participate and express their views on community development matters

(Stardahl, Zakaria, Dewar, & Panich, 2004). There is no much effort to stimulate critical debate in order to encourage ordinary communities to speak or to ask follow-up questions and to actively lead policy and development processes (Mac Kay, 2004). Additionally, Ward Committees are only advisory bodies and are designed to support the Ward Councillor and inform the council officials of the needs at community level (DoPLG, 1998). This, I argue results in policy processes that do not totally reflect the outcomes of the public discussions (Njenga, 2009). Thus, housing policies have largely been state-driven or contractor managed and this approach serves to exclude the beneficiaries. Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002) conclude that lack of capacity among ordinary citizens has an impact on the quality of participation for inclusive development. Though policies have changed over time, mechanisms for community participation have remained static. Thus, I confidently argue that progressive legal and policy provisions in South Africa lack the necessary social capital to effectively influence decisions in local governance and housing delivery. The following section provides a review of the policies and plans formulated by the Municipality of Stellenbosch to improve the living conditions for people in informal settlements.

#### **4.6.1. Pioneering approaches to sustainable urban settlements: The case of Stellenbosch**

With a housing waiting list of 20,000 and a tiny annual subsidy that covers only 300 housing opportunities, the Municipality of Stellenbosch has been grappling with the reality that their capacity to supply housing cannot meet the demand (Murcott, 2013). Realising the constitutional and the moral imperatives to improve shelter and basic services for the urban poor, the municipality created a dedicated informal settlement unit in 2009 which became a full and dedicated department in 2010. The core responsibility of this department has been to manage and coordinate interventions in informal settlements. Motivated by a court order for the municipality to upgrade the Langrug settlement waste disposal system to prevent seepage to a nearby farm, the municipality intensified their plans to upgrade Langrug settlement. As depicted in figure 4.1, Langrug informal settlement is located near Franschhoek town centre within Stellenbosch. The new department acknowledged from the onset that the upgrade of informal settlements such as Langrug (see figure 4.2) would be a continuous and participatory learning curve for the municipality and other stakeholders (Murcott, 2013). The approach attempts to give effect to the principles and procedures as contemplated in the UISP (Municipality of Stellenbosch (MoS), 2013:62).





**Figure 4.1: The locational context of Langrug** (Google earth, 2013).

Stellenbosch is romantically characterised as the land of bucolic vineyards, rolling hills and lush country side. The region is arguably a leading tourist area in the Western Cape and is home to high end restaurants and luxurious wines. The R45 road (see figure 4.1) links Franschhoek and Langrug to Cape Town and to the entire Stellenbosch. Franschhoek (see figure 4.1) is home to wealthy families in South Africa. However, hidden between the folds and crevices of Stellenbosch and Franschhoek hills are some of the most extreme cases of urban poverty (see figure 4.1 and 4.2). For example, Langrug (see figure 4.2) has many households that do not have access to toilets, water and sanitation while shelter is built from plastic rags and tin sheets (CORC & MoS, 2011). While the Municipality of Stellenbosch has been focussing on improving the lives of the urban poor, the approach is arguably a traditional one aimed at delivering housing (CORC/SDI, 2013). However, the upgrading of informal settlement of Langrug (see figure 4.2) is the first step in a new direction dubbed an



incremental, people-driven and partnership-based process and this appears to provide the foundation for an inclusive and pro-poor city (MoS, 2013).



**Figure 4. 2: The location and sections in Langrug** (Google Earth, 2013; Field data)

Thus, the municipality formulated the Integrated Human Settlement Plan (IHSP), dubbed the Stellenbosch 2017 Housing Strategy. The strategy targets more than 20,500 residential units to overcome the housing backlog (MoS, 2013). Over 234 projects have been planned for and are distributed across the settlements and nodes as identified in the Spatial Development Framework (SDF) of Stellenbosch. The strategy identifies and prioritises informal settlement upgrading with estimated cost of the entire programme being in excess of R 9 billion over a period of 10 years (MoS, 2013). Further, the municipality has formulated a Services Delivery Business Plan (SDBP) as part of the Human Settlements and Property Development directorate. In all these initiatives, “Langrug informal settlement (see figure 4.2) is prioritised and attracts 41.3 per cent of the total pro-poor housing units” and services (MoS, 2013: 63). The programme receives strong support from the municipality who appear to allow the

department in charge of informal settlements to act beyond the RDP horizons. The agenda for in-situ improvement of informal settlements is now institutionalised in the Stellenbosch Integrated Development Plan (IDP) as part of the municipality's broad Dignified Living Programme (DLP) and is allocated a specific budget (Murcott, 2013). In this way, Stellenbosch seems to be moving towards the realisation of the principles that underpin the UISP as mandated by the BNG and the constitution. The following paragraphs argue that despite the existence of remarkable legal and policy shifts and frameworks, the Municipality of Stellenbosch has not shifted away from ordinary and ambiguous participatory approaches to ensure that ordinary citizens have a practical and active participation on the policy and plan process.

#### **4.6.2. Public participation strategies in Stellenbosch: Business as usual**

The Municipality of Stellenbosch (2013) indicates in the IDP that policy and development action across the municipality will be informed by global, national, regional and district level policy directives. Further, the municipality indicates that the revision and subsequent implementation of the 3rd generation IDP needs to consider the views of citizens and interest groups. Accordingly, Part 10 of the IDP contains proposals for accommodating both local level and town-wide considerations in the preparation of municipal IDPs and project implementation. However, I argue that the mechanisms to ensure effective public participation are not ambitious and will not facilitate active community participation in Stellenbosch. The Municipality of Stellenbosch has put in place ambitious and quite progressive settlement plans and housing policies but fails to break the box of restrictive, 'tick box'-like participatory mechanisms as listed below:

#### **Specific measures considered are:**

According to the Municipality of Stellenbosch (2013:42-43), the municipality seeks to promote public participation by implementing the following measures:

- Engages ward committees in a structured manner to discuss strategic town-wide issues related to service delivery;
- Allocate each of the four public participation officials in the municipality to a region. The regions are composed of a number of wards;
- Ensuring that each region's public participation official and community workers allocated to regions attend all ward committee meetings;

- Preparing a standard 'issue' sheet to be completed after the ward committee meeting for distribution/attention to relevant officials within the municipal administration system;
- Ensuring that the IDP office completes a process of ward planning for every ward during the 2012/13 business year for incorporation into the 2013/14 IDP;
- Ensuring that ward plans indicate the planned use of R150 000 annual ward allocations as well as other municipal service delivery programmes.

These mechanisms are not different from those promoted by the national government. Thus, though there is new direction and dynamic policy focus in settlement upgrading, the municipality of Stellenbosch still lacks ambitious measures to ensure active involvement of local people in the development activities. Langrug upgrading is a special case because of the involvement of the NGOs and CBOs. The following section argues that despite the existence of remarkable legal and policy frameworks, post-apartheid evictions and poorly executed relocations are still a reality in South Africa.

#### **4.7. Despair: From housing the poor, to evictions and clearing informal settlements**

South African cities are areas for concentrated economic activity and wealth generation as well as areas of utter poverty. Informal settlements in these areas are characterised by desperate housing shortages and unauthorised land occupations (Huchzermeyer, 2009; Tshikotshi, 2009). Policy shifts have not been adequately put in practice and translated into changed delivery models on the ground. There are no necessary changes in systems, mechanisms, regulations and political will to enable real take-up on the alternative approaches at provincial and local levels vis-à-vis informal settlements and housing delivery (South African Presidency, 2008). Realistically speaking, urban poor residents are still being forcibly evicted and relocated, leaving them vulnerable and homeless, and this deepens the patterns of poverty, increase discrimination and leads to continued social exclusion (Tshikotshi, 2009). Reasons for these forced evictions are arguably a manifestation of neo-liberal policies taking a toll on the urban poor. It is vital to note that these forced evictions do not only violate human rights and the constitution of South Africa, but are also a counter factor to sustainable human development and the genuine fight against poverty and inequality (Durand-Lasserve, 2006). Thus, the implications of forceful interventions in informal settlements prompt Cobbett (2007) to argue that the United Nations views evictions as a gross violation of human rights, specifically the right to housing.

Despite good intentions, some post-apartheid laws such as the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from Unlawful Occupation of Land Act (no. 19 of 1998), otherwise known as the PIE Act, have been used to legally justify forceful evictions and subject millions urban indigents to agonising poverty. The realisation of socio-economic rights over time is hampered by the inadequacy of related rights. As Huchzermeyer (2003) notes, the notion of progressive realisation of the right to housing, in particular the location of pro-poor housing, is inextricably tied to the right to land, and is hampered by the constitutional protection of the extremely skewed existing property rights to land (Bradlow, 2013). Lacunas like the PIE's bias and more focus on the right of the land owner than on the moral consideration of reasons for land invasions and the failure to factor in the amount of time the illegal occupiers have lived on the land in question appear to complicate in-situ settlement upgrading. Therefore, indirectly and arguably, laws like the PIE Act of 1998 support the uprooting of informal settlements. This has been enhanced by the state's support and application of 'all means possible' to do away with informal settlements by 2014 (Huchzermeyer, 2008; South African Presidency, 2008). Hence, the space and flexibility that arise from the BNG policy are not being appropriated. Rather, "municipalities have typically utilised the BNG funding opportunity to fast-track subsidy budget for the usual conventional projects without real exploration of innovative and new approaches" (South African Presidency, 2008: 54). Although the presidency of Jacob Zuma in 2009 promised to bring renewed vigour to the UISP and to upgrade and integrate 400,000 informal settlements and households with access to basic services and secure tenure, the UISP performance continues to fall short of public expectation (Bradlow, 2013).

Continued poor results in settlement interventions are a subject of both scope and process of some policies and laws. For instance, the UISP made provisions for community participation, but through relatively formal, and often political and controversial ward committee structures. Further, the "UISP makes little progress in resolving the potential contradiction of housing as an individual good and settlement upgrading as provision of communal goods" (Bradlow, 2013: 81). Further, the UISP provides a rationale for in-situ upgrading but does not deviate much from the basic nature of a housing policy that has single-minded focus on the physical house. In addition, there seems to be a laxity on the part of public officials to execute dynamic policies. Huchzermeyer (2008) cites a great deal of reluctance on the part of local government officials to implement the UISP policy. To date, the UISP is not

necessarily the municipalities' choice when intervening in an informal settlement (Huchzermeyer, 2008).

#### **4.8. Conclusion**

This chapter has argued that South Africa has very good policies and laws that seek to protect the urban poor. The laws and policies seek to give effect to the realisation of the Bill of Rights as contained in the 1996 constitution. The BNG policy is particularly impressive and provides a strong foundation for changing the status-quo in settlement intervention. However, the chapter has also established that there is significant failure in the implementation of dynamic policies characterised by a trend of reverting to undemocratic and restrictive approaches to settlement interventions. Most municipalities have continued to focus on conventional housing projects as a means to 'eliminating' informal settlements. Further, the Municipality of Stellenbosch has put in place plans and policies to support in-situ upgrading but has maintained unambitious mechanisms to facilitate effective public participation. With millions still living in informal settlements and lacking access to basic services, the stated aim of government to have zero informal settlements by 2014 is virtually impossible. Having reviewed the policy environment and established that the Municipality of Stellenbosch is making significant strides in implementing the ideals of the UISP, the next chapter presents the research findings.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **5.0. Overview**

This chapter presents the research findings on Langrug settlement upgrading programme. The chapter presents case facts in their raw form as collected during field visits which the researcher undertook in May and June 2013. This chapter is divided into eight sections. I use the first section to present findings on the background of the Langrug partnership-based in-situ settlement upgrading programme. In the second section, I present the findings on the nature of the partnership. Section two also summarises the role of each of the programme partners that include South African SDI alliance, the political and administrative structures of the Municipality of Stellenbosch, academics, community residents and the Langrug community leaders (see figure 5.1). Using the third section, I present development issues prioritised by the partnership. In the fourth section, I present findings on institutional and power relations. I use the fifth section to present findings on achievements that have been realised this far. In the sixth section, I present findings on the factors that underpin the operations of the programme. Further, I use section seven to present findings on the status of savings schemes and the challenges affecting the programme. Finally, I use section eight to draw my last reflections from the field and also to introduce the chapter about discussion of the findings. The following section presents the brief background of the Langrug settlement upgrading programme.

### **5.1. Why Langrug? Brief background of the programme**

The formation of the partnership to upgrade Langrug was initiated in 2010 by the Municipality of Stellenbosch. All the research participants indicated that the municipality realised that they could not deliver development for everybody due do challenges associated with limited resources and mobilisation of people living in informal settlements to facilitate interventions. To comply with the court order on reducing grey water seepage from Langrug onto the nearby privately owned farm, the Municipality of Stellenbosch tried different initiatives to improve sanitation in Langrug. However, initial interventions such as installation of chemical toilets lacked popular support and got rejected by the residents.

Over three years ago, Community Organisation Resources Centre (CORC) was invited by the Municipality of Stellenbosch to help the government organise the community of Langrug. The municipality reached out to the community and other organisations currently working in Langrug.

(Interview, Sizwe (Planner: CORC), 30 May 2013).

In 2010, the Municipality of Stellenbosch established a dedicated department to coordinate development activities on informal settlements in Stellenbosch. Thus, in this partnership, the municipality is represented by both the Department of Informal Settlements (DoIS) and the ward councillor responsible for Langrug.

As a new department, we felt that we did not have the resources that would enable us engage with a community that was very complicated. So, I brought in SDI and CORC to come and collaborate with us so that we together facilitate a network of service providers to facilitate a positive engagement with Langrug. The partnership involves support NGOs to help in building the capacity of the community to drive the upgrading process.

(Interview, Carolissen (Manager: Department of Informal Settlements), 3 June 2013).

In Langrug, we have a partnership that involves the Municipality of Stellenbosch, Langrug community, SDI South African alliance and academics. The partnership is pursuing innovative ways of providing public services by focusing on two things: improving small scale infrastructural services such as drainages and toilets, which the community can easily do with our support, and providing higher order engineering services.

(Interview, Robyn (Project Coordinator: Department of Informal Settlements), 3 June 2013).

The next section presents findings on the nature of the partnership.

#### **5.2.0. The nature of the partnership: A web of relations in action**

Both the researcher and a number of research participants see all the partners to be important players with each contributing in a particular way towards the realisation of the programme objectives. There are different roles performed by different partners. The activities include inter alia, community mobilisation, project funding, planning and implementation. A number of research participants indicated that partners perform different but complementary roles, and this makes the programme unique.

The community is being organised by CORC in a very special way which the municipality would never manage. The community residents are also organising themselves in sector groups such as health to help people living with HIV/AIDS. The health group has evolved into an organised group that is assisting and handling a lot of health matters for Langrug with the support from the nearby health clinic and the municipality. The community and the municipality are acting as a common centre in upgrading Langrug. The partnership is a common ground for partners to equally contribute towards Langrug upgrading.

(Interview, Robyn (Project Coordinator: Department of Informal Settlements), 3 June 2013).



The Informal Settlement Network (ISN) which is part of the South African SDI alliance works closely with CORC and other Langrug community organisations to mobilise the community and sensitise residents on savings schemes. The municipality supports the NGOs and vice-versa, but it is the NGOs which mobilise the community through community leaders. The community residents then cooperate, support and volunteer in the planning and implementation of the development activities.

I am part of the local leadership for Langrug. The municipality introduced ISN to us and we supported the idea. ISN is a network of poor people who live in informal settlements and works to improve the living conditions of the poor. The Langrug local leadership which comprises portfolios such as project leader, mapping officer, health, education, and social represents and implements the ideals of the ISN as a neutral local structure to facilitate inclusive settlement upgrading. The main aim is to have a local coordinating team speaking for all residents.

(Interview, Alfred (Community Leader), 29 May 2013).

I believe without local leaders' role to mobilise the community, the programme cannot achieve much benefits for the community. The local leaders lead the community residents in partnering with the Municipality of Stellenbosch and the NGOs.

(Interview, community resident, 29 May 2013).

A number of research participants indicated that community leaders form an important structure as they facilitate and coordinate upgrading activities in the settlement. The community residents and its leadership receive valuable support from both the municipality and the SDI alliance as suggested below:

As a mapper, I work with the community and I receive support in form of capacity building from CORC, SDI and other partners in this programme. The community and its local leadership lead the upgrading programme while CORC/SDI and municipality facilitate the upgrading process by giving financial and technical support to the local structures. The community and the local leadership are working hard to organise the community while ISN has upgraded our minds through sensitisation and we are now locally championing the process. Before ISN came to help us, we did not even have toilets and we were not organised in any way to improve our situation. As a community, we know what is working and what is not working by being given the opportunity to experiment our ideas.

(Interview, Kholeka (Co-researcher and community resident), 29 May 2013).

We mobilised the community and now Langrug is united and has an effective local leadership which is respected by the residents.

(Interview, Ncambele (Co-leader: ISN), 30 May, 2013).



While the municipality and the support NGOs contribute money and other resources for in-situ upgrading, the community and its leadership support and undertake the upgrading processes.

(Interview, Trevor (Community Leader), 3 June 2013).

CORC is the mediator among the partners while the municipality comes in with funding and other resources. CORC provides technical assistance by modifying community initiated plans and designs so as to meet municipal standards. SDI and CORC are like “father and son” – or more appropriately husband and wife. This is so because the two institutions apply similar principles and tools in settlement upgrading. CORC’s involvement is essential as it facilitates for peaceful ways of engagement between Langrug and the local government.

Both community residents and community leaders receive capacity building in form of skills such as mapping, planning, community leadership, report writing, social mobilisation, builders, and all these skills are built by CORC which receives funds and support from SDI. This is very important and makes the community efficient. The municipality, CORC and the community have signed a MoU which makes the partners contribute in different but complementary ways for upgrading the settlement.

(Interview, Ncambele (Co-leader: ISN), 30 May, 2013).

The role of SDI revolves around facilitating exchange visits, capacity building in financial management, report writing, research and documentation and project financing. Exchange visits provide learning opportunities for our stakeholders to acquire knowledge and skills necessary for in-situ upgrading.

(Interview, Schermbrucker (Programme Officer: SDI), 30 May 2013).

#### **5.2.1. Level of partner contribution: Are partners equal?**

Although all research participants noted that all partners are needed in achieving the goals of the programme, a number of respondents indicated that some partners perform more duties and contribute more resources than others.

The community is the most critical element in this partnership while the municipality coordinates all the activities. I have the constitutional and the statutory obligation to manage, to develop and to provide services to the residents of Langrug. I am held accountable by the community and we will always exist for them. Depending on the nature and magnitude of the activities, CORC is usually requested on our behalf to provide public services. Overall, by way of co-researching, co-planning, skills transfer, joint funding, writing academic papers and student projects, Langrug programme yields benefits for both the community and the partners.

(Interview, Carolissen (Manager: Department of Informal Settlements), 3 June 2013).

SDI and its alliance members consider savings as central to their interventions in informal settlements. Thus, the involvement of the federation as a grouping for the urban poor (FEDUP) is regarded fundamental by the alliance. In Langrug, FEDUP works closely with ISN in mobilising residents around the idea of savings schemes as reported below:

Our role has been specifically to talk about savings and the role of savings in in-situ settlement upgrading processes. We believe savings bring people together and we teach the people about the role of savings in creating a united force for settlement upgrading. Further, in our communities, we have architects, bricklayers, painters, caregivers, planners and entrepreneurs. Our work in Langrug through our local representatives revolves around the concept of savings; FEDUP believes residents of informal settlements can effectively power community driven and people-centred settlement upgrading.

(Interview, Rosy (Regional Leader: FEDUP), 5 June 2013).

It is widely recognised that the community and its local structures form a determinant structure for the success of Langrug programme.

Having established the nature of the partnership, I now use the next section to present the findings on development priorities of the partnership.

### **5.3. Programme focus: A landmark difference**

The development issue for Langrug was identified through community enumerations and profiling. The focus of the programme is very different from the conventional approaches to settlement upgrading in South Africa. The focus is not on achieving a free-standing house for individuals, but on ensuring in-situ partnership-based comprehensive settlement upgrading. All the research participants mentioned the provision of adequate public services to improve the functional structure of the settlement as a priority:

We cannot just build houses, we have to upgrade the land first and we are now upgrading the land by building roads, drainages and sanitation facilities. After all this, then we want to consider improving our houses.

(Interview, community resident, 29 May 2013).

The most important development issues now and in the near future is to improve sanitation and health standards. Most people in Langrug are suffering from tuberculosis (TB) as there is dirty all over the settlement. There is poor sanitation and need to improve the physical environment so that we can live better.

(Interview, community resident, 29 May 2013).

We prioritise development activities that will improve water supply, sanitation and the physical environments. We are trying to make the community clean by doing the drainage system. Re-blocking is also a top issue so that more spaces are created for public services and housing.

(Interview, community resident, 29 May 2013).

For now, Section F considers re-blocking as a priority. This should be followed by creating drainage channels and making cleaner toilets. Thus, focus is on improving the functional structure of the section.

(Interview, community resident, 29 May 2013).

We currently focus on improving water and sanitation services and facilities, and constructing roads. Langrug should have its own site and service and we need to do more re-blocking to create more spaces for better services.

(Interview, Alfred (Community Leader), 29 May 2013).

The construction of the roads, toilets and drainages, supply of electricity, and improving security are prioritised development issues for Langrug programme. People in Zwelitsha (see figure 4.2) are still using the bush while others come all the way down near the new wash facility in Mandela Park (see figure 4.2).

(Interview, Kholeka (Co-researcher and community resident), 29 May 2013).

Instead of only supporting housing subsidy for the poor, we believe in in-situ informal settlement upgrading and inclusive Stellenbosch.

(Interview, Schermbrucker (Programme Officer: SDI), 30 May 2013).

The roads and sanitation still form the most urgent development agenda for Langrug. We focus on upgrading sewer system and water pump to improve water and sanitation situation for the whole community. We are focusing on improving the capacity of the infrastructure.

(Interview, Sizwe (Planner: CORC), 30 May 2013).

The settlement needs adequate public services such as water and sanitation, and electricity. Further, we need to service land and give people secure tenure and they will change their living conditions. Housing should be treated as a long term issue. Once we have adequate infrastructure, we will be more convinced that we are going nowhere and we will know that this is our permanent home; hence, we will strive to improve ourselves.

(Interview, Trevor (Community Leader), 3 June 2013).

...We have done much of the planning and now we are focusing on improving infrastructures. The other thing is that we must continue to push back the frontage of poverty, disease, hunger and unemployment in Langrug...

(Interview, Carolissen (Manager: Department of Informal Settlements), 3 June 2013).

However, other research participants indicated that the key development issue should be housing. The issue that occupies people's minds when they hear of savings is basically housing and secure tenure. All the same, Langrug programme is focusing on improving living conditions in a holistic manner (Interview, Rosy (Regional Leader: FEDUP), 5 June 2013). This view was emphasised by the ward councillor responsible for Langrug as she maintained:

Though, people know that land is a challenge, they still need housing and secure land tenure. My long term development issue for Langrug is security of tenure and housing. In the meantime, I support the partnership's focus on improving the structure of the settlement by improving roads, water and sanitation before providing RDP housing in the 2015/2016 financial year.

(Interview, Nombulelo (Ward Councillor), 3 June 2013).

Having established the main development agenda in the Langrug settlement upgrading programme, the following section presents findings on the way institutions are relating in this partnership.

#### **5.4.0. Institutional relations**

This is probably one of the key aspects of the partnership which has determined the level of progress seen in Langrug. All the respondents revealed that the partnership faces significant but wieldy institutional challenges, and it is clear that there are political divisions within and between the various partners. The following reflections from the field present respondents' experiences and views on how institutions are relating in the Langrug upgrade activities:

When it comes to the Stellenbosch Municipality, there is a lot of politics, regulations and procedures. I would say that these people have a lot of regulations and procedures which they bring in this partnership. For the ward councillor, we do not know as a community why she is working against the programme. We are working well with the support NGOs and community leadership.

(Interview, community resident, 29 May 2013).

The relationship among the actors in the Langrug programme is that whoever controls more funds tends to control the relationship and the processes. The municipality is involved in some political games and usually want to do things in their usual way. However, project tender processes are understood and administered by the community and its leadership. Langrug development committee is strong as they receive support from CORC.

(Interview, Sizwe (Planner: CORC), 30 June 2013).

You know everywhere if you meet someone with bigger moneys, they will never act equal. The municipality always wants to control the community by being the decision makers. For Langrug, this has happened several times and the programme has to some extent been shaped by this kind of 'big brother' behaviour by the municipality'. 'There is a lion in the room'. For CORC/SDI, they are not here to patronise the community and they act in equal terms with the community.

(Interview, Trevor (Community Leader), 3 June 2013).

There are things partners do not agree on and the major problem is that the ward councillor does not support the community. The councillor even wanted to remove the community leaders but as a community, we said no and told her not to interfere. It appears the councillor is on her own mission.

(Interview, community resident, 29 May 2013).

Further, most respondents revealed that there is a breakdown in communication and this has created a fertile ground for divisions among the partners:

I think there is a breakdown in communication between the municipality and the other partners. There is an agreement that all partners cannot work and/or do anything in the community without informing other members of the partnership. However, the municipality and the councillor intervene in the community without following the agreement. We are rejecting the councillor's manoeuvres and we will not allow such.

(Interview, community resident, 29 May 2013).

Currently, partnership meetings do not go as usual and that there is a breakdown in communication among the stakeholders. CORC/SDI is key in coordinating the projects, issues and managing misunderstandings in this partnership. We have CORC close to us when we need them as a community.

(Interview, Alfred (Community Leader), 29 May 2013).

However, other respondents indicated that there is a cordial relationship between the municipality and the other partners but that the office of the ward councillor is against the programme:

Institutions are trying hard and succeeding in working together but I think the councillor is not cooperative. I think the ward councillor wants to control everything and wants to chase our hard working community leaders. Ultimately, conflicts in this partnership are about who controls the community and resources. I am very concerned with the ward councillor's push to fire our community leaders; this may threaten the upgrading processes. So if the community leaders stop volunteering and the community is not locally well organised, then who will coordinate the construction of the wash facility, the roads?

(Interview, member of the savings scheme at section F, 29 May 2013).

ISN, CORC/SDI, Municipality and community-based organisations are all working well together. However, it is clear that the ward councillor is against the community leaders. She is talking of contract when the community leaders are volunteers and not on contract. During the last community meeting, the community insisted that the community leaders are volunteers, thus, no need to talk about firing them as she wanted.

(Interview, community resident, 29 May 2013).

The relationship among the community and its local leaders, supporting NGOs and the municipality is warm. We jointly changed toilet centres from places of graffiti into places of learning and promoting literacy. We hope to continue working together for the good of the entire community.

(Interview, Alfred (Community Leader), 29 May 2013).

The municipality has changed and the partnership makes them engage with us more to improve Langrug. CORC builds technical capacities such as in project and financial reporting, mapping, budgeting and cost estimation, planning, designing and management of development projects for the community. ISN is helping community leaders in the mobilisation of the community. However, the ward councillor is not supporting us; she is just busy with ward development committees.

(Interview, Kholeka (Co-researcher and community resident), 29 May 2013).

We usually speak to the community through the local organisation, local federations and local leadership. We directly provide support to CORC who in turn supports the community agenda. There are compromises, negotiations, discussions and we always consult with the community leadership to ensure projects are locally driven. However, the success of the Langrug programme is a bit more complex and does not completely owe its success to the community; it's a bit of everybody's contributions.

(Interview, Schermbrucker (Programme Officer: SDI), 30 May 2013).

It was observed during field work that CORC provides a vital link between the SDI alliance and the community. SDI and all other alliance members as well as the municipality work closely with CORC as they intervene in Langrug (see figure 5.1). On the other hand, the community is mobilised and represented by community leaders who are residents of Langrug. It was also observed that there is no deliberate link between the office of the ward councillor and CORC, consequently, the relationship between the ward councillor and the community is hostile:

As CORC, we are proud of community leaders in Langrug; we now have people like Alfred as the secretary who have the capacity to do quality reports and minutes about meetings. The community can generate its own reports and minutes which they present before various stakeholders. Further, people like Kholeka can now use GIS, aerial photographs to do mapping and community profiling to

understand and champion the Langrug development agenda. For example, the municipality is not supporting the re-blocking project but many residents of Section F are going ahead with their savings for re-blocking. Our role as professionals working for CORC is to enhance what the community wants by facilitating and awakening the little things on how to make useful plans such as consultation of neighbours, observe some laws, designing, financing and see how best to co-exist with other neighbouring communities and systems.

(Interview, Sizwe (Planner: CORC), 30 May 2013).

Initially, I was not aware of the responsibilities of CORC. Now I know that CORC is there to facilitate active public participation. However, ward development committees who represent the community on various development issues are ignored in this partnership. It is regrettable that there is a gap between CORC and my ward development committees. I cannot say that we are working together with the NGOs and the Langrug community leaders. I am not happy with these so-called community leaders because we are busy undermining one another, there is struggle for power. Regarding the municipality, my office has no problem with them, we are working together.

(Interview, Nombulelo (Ward councillor), 3 June May 2013).

Further, the ward councillor indicated that her office in collaboration with the ward development committees should lead and coordinate all the development activities in Langrug. This assertion sharply contrasts the views of a number of other research participants representing the SDI alliance, the municipality and the community.

Being a democratically elected ward councillor, I believe I am the official leader of Langrug. Therefore, anybody must work with me and through me in upgrading the settlement. The ward development committees and my office should lead in the mobilisation of the community. I am the leader of Langrug and I have the mandate of the people to represent them. Whatever that needs to happen in Langrug should involve me and my ward development committees. All the partners need to be united through the office of the councillor.

(Interview, Nombulelo (Ward Councillor), 3 June 2013).

#### **5.4.1. Level of resource contribution and institutional relations**

Although each partner may be contributing the same in different forms, the municipality feels they are contributing more in terms of land and money. This was confirmed by a big number of respondents who indicated that the municipality usually wants to apply its usual conventional ways of settlement intervention. The role of resources in influencing the balance of power and institutional relations is crucial for Langrug especially since the community has very weak savings schemes to match with funds from the Community Upgrading Fund

(CUF) which is provided by SDI and CORC. The community is asked to raise 10% towards the cost of certain projects but Langrug lacks strong savings and ends up contributing in the form of sweaty-equity or the municipality ends up funding the entire project (Interview, Sizwe (Planner: CORC), 30 May 2013; Rosy (Regional Leader: FEDUP), 5 June 2013).

Actual power relations in Langrug indicate that we need to manage the skewed power relations. Where money is involved and held is where power resides. Power is controlled by those with more money. In our set up, power relations has been negative. It appears there is no equal status and mutual relations in this partnership.

(Interview, Robyn (Project Coordinator: Department of Informal Settlements), 3 June 2013)

The following paragraphs present findings on power relations among the partners.

#### **5.4.2. Quiet Conflicts: Power relations**

The Langrug programme is facing challenges on the issue of power relations. The challenges are induced by the ideological frontages such as different ways of interpreting the notion of development, different ways of engaging with the community and the tendency to flip back to conventional approaches to settlement upgrading among some partners. Some research participants indicated that the partnership is facing philosophical and ideological misunderstandings which are closely associated with the desire to control resources, and the exercise of political gains. A number of research participants indicated that conflicts in such arrangements are inevitable and that the situation of power relations in Langrug is within acceptable and expected levels. The question here is whose authority matters in Langrug?

I feel the municipality tries to force us to do what they want. Sometimes we fail to agree on the prioritisation of and approach to settlement development issues but since we do not have much money, we usually agree and depend on the municipality to fund our development projects.

(Interview, Kholeka (Co-researcher and community resident), 29 May 2013).

The political spheres claim to be the official representatives of the community and they constantly want to claim the control of the entire process. The municipality also wants to control the processes and determine how things should be going for the community. But CORC believes that the community and its local leaders are best suited to mobilise themselves because they best know the dynamics and needs of the settlement.

(Interview, Sizwe (Planner: CORC), 30 May 2013).



Politicians want to dominate and control the activities, they want to hijack the programme and this creates misunderstandings and fuels political divisions. Politicians want to take over power and somehow want to stop the NGOs and community leaders from being the leaders.

(Interview, community resident, 29 May 2013).

I need a community structure that will work with the office of the councillor and the ward development committees. The current community leaders are busy undermining my authority, and I do not want them at all.

(Interview, Nombulelo (Ward Councillor), 29 May 2013).

Our arrangement in Langrug is a negotiated compromise incrementally built over time. There are disagreements based on what different stakeholders perceive as key development issues for the settlement. There are cases when communities prioritise provision of housing and land tenure but government may focus on providing toilets and this in itself may be a source of misunderstanding amongst us. Nevertheless, the only institution with resource capacity to meet the development needs of Langrug is the government.

(Interview, Schermbrucker (Programme Officer: SDI), 30 May 2013).

A number of research participants indicated that the idea of savings schemes is not clearly understood in Langrug. It was also revealed that there are more than three institutions that claim expertise and authority on savings. Who should be the ultimate authority on the concept of savings?

We had a good response among the local people to form savings schemes with the number being around 12 groups initially. However, FEDUP's emphasis on the need for community savings with a slight neglect on individual and/or purposeful savings weakened the idea. There is lot of misunderstandings between the nature and purpose of savings here. This has made us not achieve much in in this respect. Community leaders should be at the centre of encouraging and leading the way for savings because the local leaders know and understand the local socio-economic conditions better than the external groups such as regional leaders from FEDUP.

(Interview, Alfred (Community Leader), 29 May 2013)

The ward councillor does not support the idea of savings and she tells residents that savings are for 'poor people'. She tells Langrug residents that if one works outside the community such as in restaurants and farms, then they should not join the savings schemes because they have money. This contradicts the Federations' and CORC's emphasis on having everybody saving for community and individual purposes. So far, the ward councillor has confused the community and this has contributed to the low levels of savings. The ward councillor brings populist ideas to the programme.

(Interview, community resident, 29 May 2013).

The following paragraphs present information on politics and power relations in Langrug.

#### **5.4.3. Contending with everyday politics**

The programme is facing obvious political challenges. There is mistrust among selected political and the non-political spheres working in Langrug. This has recently been fuelled by poor communication among partners and the emerging election mood associated with the 2014 national elections. However, all the research participants consider 2014 national elections as a challenge but not as a threat to the continuation of the partnership.

Even the municipality officials are owned by the politicians. There is no strong connection between the political and non-political structure. There is perception that community leaders and other active partners are interfering in the political space, and that community leaders are undermining the authority of politicians. As community leaders, we have a certain level of authority and politicians also have their own authority.

(Interview, Trevor (Community Leader), 3 June 2013).

We work in a highly politicised environment. As we head towards elections in 2014, it becomes even more difficult for us as a government department. We implement political policy and this in itself smells some politics especially during elections year. This presents a great challenge and it may affect our work but our partnership will not collapse.

(Interview, Robyn (Project Coordinator: Department of Informal Settlements), 3 June 2013).

Community politics is very difficult to manage. It is actually beyond politics but simply evil suspicion, its paranoia and gossip, where everybody is suspicious and everybody distrusts everybody. There is too much suspicion and that it is a very basic and animalistic kind of behaviour which is hard to manage. However, we are able to map that kind of political paranoia and intrigue and we manage it. We are succeeding in Langrug because we clarified upfront the role of individual partners in a flexible MoU that seeks to limit the scope for political conflicts and confusion.

(Interview, Carolissen (Manager: Department of Informal Settlements), 3 June 2013).

If we allowed politicians to be in charge of the programme, then everything about the programme would have been politicised. The community is currently united and does not want to see this programme overtaken by politicians.

(Interview, Alfred (Community Leader), 29 May 2013).

Regarding national and local elections, we are not sure if the next political leadership and the mayoral office will be supportive of the programme. If not, then we may not succeed. We also do not know if

the new political and civic leadership will support or reject the existing MoU, so we may just find ourselves ending abruptly.

(Interview, Sizwe (Planner, CORC), 30 May 2013).

This view on the uncertainties surrounding the future of the programme in Langrug is shared by FEDUP regional officials as Rosy made it clear by saying that:

I would be worried if there is change of government in 2014 at whatever level because it is likely that we will have to renegotiate the Langrug partnership and this may prove difficult. But generally, people in Langrug are united, they want to see transformation. I do not think there is eminent political threat associated with the elections on the Langrug programme.

(Interview, Rosy (Regional Leader: FEDUP), 5 June 2013).

Though I know there will be increased political interference next year due to national elections, I do not think that disturbances will be strong enough to significantly affect the programme. The community knows exactly what we want and they will be able to stand against petty politics that would jeopardise our future.

(Interview, Alfred (Community Leader), 29 May 2013).

In Langrug, we have political affiliations and patronages. Some people say they cannot work unless a certain political structure is involved while others argue that they legally represent the community. Politicians would want to create and influence the development processes for the community and SDI does not believe in such.

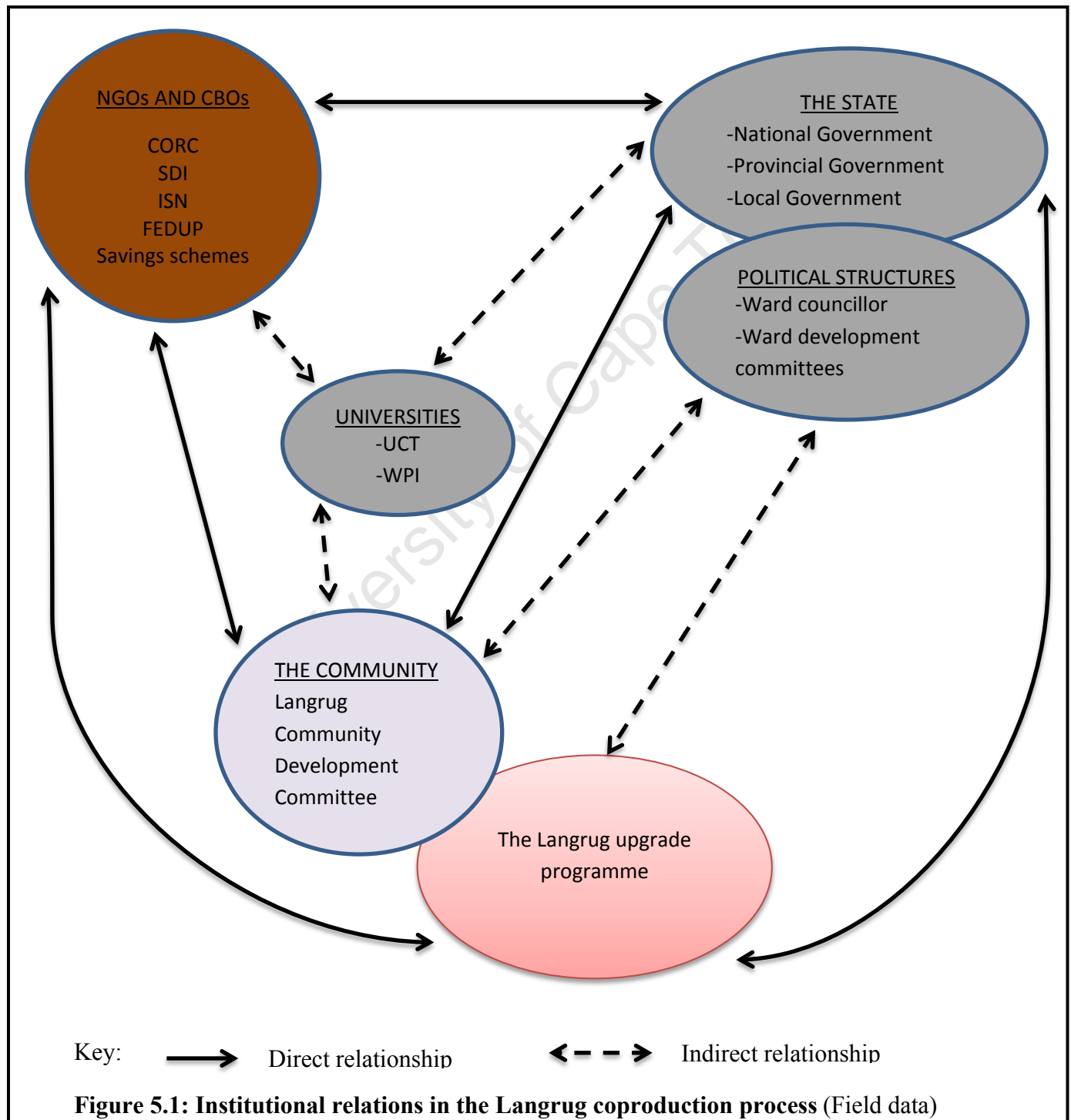
(Interview, Schermbrucker (Programme Officer: SDI), 30 May 2013).

There is community perception that the councillor is not doing much and that I am not reporting back to the community. There is lack of communication among the partners and if there is a meeting, sometimes, I am not invited and people tend to think that there is a gap between the councillor's office and other partners. Thus, with my ward development committees, we have made it clear that we do not want community leaders in Langrug. However, I believe the municipality and other partners will continue working in Langrug beyond 2014.

(Interview, Nombulelo (Ward Councillor), 3 June 2013).

There are four clusters of institutions that form the Langrug partnership. As shown in figure 5.1, these include the state, NGOs, the community and universities. These institutions have different levels of authority on the community and on the on the Langrug upgrade programme. Their level of influence on the upgrade programme filters through either direct or indirect institutional relations as depicted in figure 5.1. For instance, there is a direct and

strong relationship between the state and the NGOs/CBOs. Both the state and the NGOs/CBOs influence the community and the programme through the community leaders (see figure 5.1). Conversely, the relationship between the programme and universities is currently weak and indirect (see figure 5.1). As portrayed in figure 5.1, the community and its local leadership provide a determinant structure for partnership activities in Langrug. CORC is a key mediator amongst the partners in the Langrug upgrade programme.



Having established this web of relations, I now use the next section to present the findings on what has been achieved in Langrug so far.

### **5.5. Achievements: How much transformation do we see in Langrug?**

Though the upgrading activities are still underway, the partnership has managed to achieve some improvements in the structure of the settlement. Many activities and innovations have been implemented. These include inter alia, community enumeration and profiling, improving drainage and sanitation (see figures 5.2 and 5.3), improved accessibility (see figures 5.4 and 5.5) and a better working relationship between the residents of Langrug and the Municipality of Stellenbosch. A number of research participants indicated that they are satisfied with the level of progress and achievement done in Langrug so far, but were cautious to mention that more needs to be done to fully upgrade the settlement.

The partnership has successfully done enumerations and settlement profiling, improved roads, increased number of toilets and we are constructing the wash facility as shown in figure 5.3. The settlement is now more structured (figures 5.4 and 5.5) than before but the journey still continues.

(Interview, community resident, 29 May 2013).



**Figure 5.2: Improving drainage system in Langrug (field data)**





**Figure 5.3: A section of the new community wash facility (CORC/SDI, 2013; Field data)**



**Figure 5.4: Improving accessibility in Langrug (Filed data)**



**Figure 5.5: Improving community structure and accessibility** (Field data)

Other respondents indicated that the amount of progress seen today in Langrug is as a result of active community participation.

We have succeeded in many things such as construction of the wash facility, on-going construction of roads, and strong savings at F Section. If we allowed politicians and top-down approaches to guide the upgrading processes, these things would not be possible by now, maybe we could have been relocated by now.

(Interview, Alfred (Community Leader), 29 May 2013).

If we do not have the community with us, it would have been impossible to do the roads as we needed to move the people to pave the way for the road construction. The municipal approach would not yield the results we see today in Langrug.

(Interview, Robyn (Project Coordinator: Department of Informal Settlements), 3 June 2013).

We have created space where the community can freely sit with the municipality and discuss amicably the upgrading of Langrug. The challenges and procedures for delivering services are understood and appreciated by the community. Further, we are constantly improving accessibility by improving community roads. We have established community healthcare groups and co-researchers such as HIV/AIDS community-based support group called 'Ubuntu Health Care'. Besides, the partnership has built a community wash facility which will contribute to better sanitation for all residents by adding 4

more toilets for ladies, 3 toilets for the men, 2 warm showers for both sexes and a salon (see figure 5.3).

(Interview, Sizwe (Planner: CORC), 30 May 2013).

We have managed the construction and improvement of small internal roads (see figures 5.4 and 5.5), pump station to increase water supply in the higher level of the settlements. Further, some of the old infrastructural services have been upgraded to improve delivery of public services. Construction of bigger roads and provision of some more additional public services is currently on-going.

(Interview, Trevor (Community Leader), 3 June 2013).

When we finish constructing the central road, then I will be very happy and we will be close to finishing the upgrading process of the settlement. The settlement has a new pump station to increase water supply especially for Zwelitsha near the hills (see figure 4.2). We also have more toilets and taps than before. I see housing as a long term development issue for Langrug.

(Interview, Nombulelo (Ward Councillor), 3 June 2013).

The following section presents findings on the factors that are responsible for the level of progress seen in Langrug.

#### **5.6.0. Necessary ingredients: What really propels progress in Langrug?**

There are unique factors that are responsible for the level of progress achieved by the partnership. They basically involve what I call the tripartite factors namely: formalising the partnership, the centrality of the community and its local leadership, and the ability to manage inevitable conflicts.

##### **5.6.1. Formalising the partnership**

The programme in Langrug is guided by a formal agreement between the municipality of Stellenbosch and the SDI alliance with Langrug community as a uniting factor. The agreement is contained in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which outlines key values and principles that underpin all actions by partners. The MoU is essential in that it also regulates the behaviours and actions of some partners who may contemplate ultra-actions. A number of research participants highlighted the significance of the agreement in fostering a united action.

We are very clear about our values. As a department responsible for informal settlements, we drafted the values and presented them to the partners. All the partners agreed and had to conform to them. Firstly, we have agreed to engage the community in a non-patronizing way. Secondly, we have agreed to work with communities in a sincere and honest manner, and this is essential in managing community expectations. Thirdly, we do not force ourselves on Langrug but rather work with and not for the



settlement. Fourthly, if the community gets polarised and divided, we halt and pause our activities in the settlement. Finally, we believe in a united community that would support and champion the development agenda for Langrug.

(Interview, Carolissen (Manager: Department of Informal Settlements), 3 June 2013).

### **5.6.2. Community leadership**

The Langrug partnership is aware of the complexity of slum dynamics. In fact, the initiation of the programme owes it to this realisation by the municipality. Further, the SDI alliance believes that, and takes it as a virtue that, poor communities have the capacity to organise themselves and should lead the fight against poverty and their homeless situation. Most research participants indicated that community leaders, chosen transparently during public community meetings, are key in ensuring the success of the programme. Further, a number of research participants believe that the sustainability and continuity of the settlement upgrading activities are dependent on active community involvement.

Community leaders are members of Langrug, so, they know exactly what and how to mobilise residents on behalf of other partners. They represent and work for and with the community and they know exactly the needs of Langrug and its peoples. The leadership consults and reports back to the community so that everybody is involved in the processes.

(Interview, community resident, 29 May 2013).

As a community and its leadership, we are here to push the partnership to find a permanent solution to our filthy living conditions. While the municipality and the support NGOs contribute money for in-situ Langrug upgrading, the community and its leadership supports the processes. As a community, we design the upgrading processes and plans and present them to partners. Langrug residents are united and are working hard to improve their living conditions.

(Interview, Trevor (Community Leader), 3 June 2013).

We build capacity among community residents and community leaders through exchange visits and training on how to manage community driven settlement upgrading. We believe the community should lead the processes.

(Interview, Sizwe (Planner: CORC), 30 May 2013).

There is need to invest in community leadership who would continue with the development projects for many years. CORC has done well in this respect as we talk now; it is the local leadership and community residents that are implementing the development projects with financial support from CORC, WPI and others.

(Interview, Alfred (Community Leader), 29 May 2013).

Like in other settlements, in Langrug, we focus on creating strong savings and strong women centred federations, with a built-in ability to make decisions so that they can lead local development processes. We believe poor communities should be able to constantly work for development just like the middle class ever works.

(Interview, Schermbrucker (Programme Officer: SDI), 30 May 2013).

The programme in Langrug is essentially about making the community own the upgrading processes to ensure that they take responsibility and ownership, hence work harder to continue improving their development issues.

(Interview, Robyn (Project Coordinator: Department of Informal Settlements), 3 June 2013).

### **5.6.3. Conflict management**

The partnership is aware of the inevitability of conflicts in such arrangements. All the research participants indicated that Langrug programme is a negotiated development agenda which depends on effective contestation of ideas and approaches. However, in the process of intense and passionate discussions, conflicts ensue, thus, the success of the programme rests on effective management of misunderstandings. Besides the MoU being an essential proactive tool for conflict management, most research participants named dialogue as key in managing their conflicts:

There is conflict emerging as we speak right now. Informal settlement upgrading is hard and is much politicised. Nonetheless, the application of dialogue has made us transcend the partisanship differences and individual preferences and brought partners together and made our values bind us together.

(Interview, Carolissen (Manager: Department of Informal Settlements), 3 June 2013).

If we have misunderstandings at community level, which is inevitable, we as leaders meet to resolve them. If the problem is too big and complicated for the community leadership, then we involve CORC. If one of the local institutions like the councillor becomes a problem, we look up to CORC.

(Interview, Alfred (Community Leader), 29 May 2013).

Other research participants indicated that ensuring transparency and accountability is an essential element in ensuring a united partnership. There was stress that accountability should involve prudent use of programme resources and respecting decisions jointly taken on project planning and implementation.

I do not have any power as a leader but rather, my power is held by the people in the community. We as leaders respect what the community wants and we do not go against community decisions. If we propose a project for the community, we submit our business plans to the municipality and CORC.

(Interview, Trevor (Community Leader), 3 June 2013).

The municipality basically ensures accountability as everybody in the partnership is accountable to us. We have a MoU with CORC/SDI and the community to ensure that everybody delivers. We ask the community to take ownership and to drive the development processes. So the community is taking ownership and feeling that they need to do more while the municipality is a big brother in this partnership.

(Interview, Robyn (Project Coordinator: Department of Informal Settlements), 3 June 2013).

The following section presents the findings on the status of savings in Langrug and the challenges affecting the entire programme.

#### **5.7.0. The SDI rituals: The status of the savings schemes**

For SDI and its alliance, the ritual of savings is paramount, but the true picture on the ground is that savings is hard to actualise in South Africa. A number of research participants stated that although the partnership emphasises the need for residents of Langrug to belong to savings schemes, it has been hard to get people saving. Other research participants argued that weak savings in Langrug can also be attributed to the confusion that surrounds the notion of savings as many people are not clear about the concept. It was revealed that both political and non-political institutions in the partnership speak about savings and some contradict each other.

Savings schemes were formed after the members of the Federation of the Urban Poor (FEDUP) from Cape Town sensitised the residents of Langrug about the benefits of savings. Section F in Inkanini is trying to lead the way regarding purposeful savings for re-blocking to create adequate spaces for public services and for better formal housing in the long run. However, the savings in Langrug are currently weak.

(Interview, community resident, 29 May 2013).

People know that they can get free public services even if they do not do the savings to leverage municipal resources for improving the settlement. Our situation and legal environment compel us to provide these public goods and services. Further, the purpose of the savings schemes in Langrug is not very explicit and this complicates the situation further. I would state that the notion of savings has had limited influence in upgrading Langrug. However, savings have very good spinoffs so far, and that people have made valuable contributions in different forms especially through sweaty-equity.....

(Interview, Robyn (Project Coordinator: Department of Informal Settlements), 3 June 2013).

The South African SDI alliance experiences weak savings schemes. The South African situation is unique as we have a developmental state which provides huge amounts of housing subsidy. The people know and want to wait for government to provide community services and housing. In Langrug, the savings are weak of course, but this is not the heart of the value of savings. We feel savings schemes can serve as a means of mobilising people especially females in a given settlement to support the settlement upgrading programmes. The savings schemes can lead to stronger community leadership on slum improvement.

(Interview, Schermbrucker (Programme Officer: SDI), 30 May 2013).

Initially, the community residents used to ask why they need to do savings when the government is supposed to provide the services. For those who dispute the principle behind the savings schemes, we also understand that the South African government has promised to provide everything, thus, you cannot blame the people who refuse to be part of the savings.

(Interview, Ncambele (Co-leader: ISN), 30 May 2013).

We encourage savings in Langrug because we want people to feel proud and develop a sense of citizenship in their own space and a sense of protection by making some kind of contributions towards settlement upgrading. We believe everyone is poor in their own right but it's about galvanising a community culture to be pro-active in changing poor living conditions. We will use Section F in Langrug as a model for showcasing what community savings can do.

(Interview, Sizwe (Planner: CORC), 30 May 2013).

Though we are trying to encourage people to have activity-based savings, this has always been a difficulty undertaking. Currently, Section F is serving as a pilot savings scheme and we have planned to make it serve as a learning centre to motivate the community on the need to belong to savings schemes.

(Interview, Trevor (Community Leader), 3 June 2013).

The following paragraphs present findings on the challenges affecting the partnership.

#### **5.7.1. Challenges besieging the partnership**

There are a number of challenges affecting the programme. A number of research participants indicated that not every resident in Langrug is actively participating in the programme. Other challenges include lack of effective coordination between political and non-political institutions as well as inadequate funding. However, all the partners still believe that challenges are not insurmountable, and the programme is on firm ground.

The greatest challenge is that you know that if the 'train' comes from the station, it is not always full with people but people jump on it later. You know next year's elections will definitely affect the programme; and the local politics as we can observe it, is already affecting the activities.

(Interview, community resident, 29 May 2013).

The money is with CORC and the Municipality. When the community proposes development projects, sometimes, the funds are not released according to the wishes and prioritisation of the community. The processes and procedures of the municipality in releasing money and other logistics are long and it frustrates the community and the leadership.

(Interview, Kholeka (Co-researcher and community resident), 29 May 2013).

There are people in both the community and the partnership who are excessively politically minded, who believe that there is no partnership without involving community politics. The question of who controls what and with what mandate is crucial and is affecting Langrug as we speak.

(Interview, Ncambele (Co-leader: ISN), 30 June 2013).

The other challenge is the presence of a strong culture of dependency where the community just wants to demand for municipal services without willing to be actively involved. This has compromised the scale and the need to do savings.

(Interview, Sizwe (Planner: CORC), 30 May 2013).

The issue of savings is always a problem for us because the politicians believe that the municipality is supposed to provide free services for the community. The politicians are populists and encourage the residents to continue being passive consumers of municipal services, which is against the spirit of the partnership.

(Interview, Trevor (Community Leader), 3 June 2013).

There are different challenges in this partnership. The municipality has its own rules and procedures and would want to formalise every aspect of our activities in Langrug.

(Interview, Ncambele (Co-leader: ISN), 30 June 2013).

Other research participants revealed that there is imbalance in power relations and that those with resources tend to over regulate other players in this partnership. In addition, the municipality singlehandedly formulated the values in the MoU for other partners to conform to. The research participants from the municipality confirmed this concern from other non-state partners by stating that:

We almost took CORC for training to make them conversant with our financial procedures and systems. Through the MoU, the municipality contributes R2 million annually for infrastructural improvement in Langrug. SDI also contributes an equivalent figure. Using this fund, CORC is also a service provider but the organisation must meet our supply chain requirements. CORC is partially

meeting our requirements, though, they may not be too happy that we force them to change their ways of operations from their fluid procedures to follow our 'hard straight jacket rules'.

(Interview, Robyn (Project Coordinator: Department of Informal Settlements), 3 June 2013).

Having presented the findings on the status of the savings and the challenges affecting the programme, I now use the following section to conclude the chapter and introduce chapter six.

### **5.8.0 Conclusion**

The programme in Langrug is a case example of partnership-based in-situ settlement upgrading. The programme is improving both material and non-material aspects of the local people. In the process of working together with other partners, community leaders and residents revealed that they have acquired useful skills such as in GIS, mapping, research and report writing, community planning and design, budgeting and community leadership. These skills are crucial for realising community-driven and sustainable solutions to informal settlements. The programme focuses on improving the functional structure of the settlement and not exclusively on housing. However, the interaction in Langrug is not always neat and the process is complex as partners operate in a political and contested environment, differ in both ideology and approach. The involvement of students serves a great alternative source of neutral ideas on how to transform the settlement. In the following chapter, I discuss these findings by linking them to both existing theory on coproduction and the research question.

## **CHAPTER SIX: INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

### **6.0. Overview**

This chapter discusses the research findings as collected from the field and as presented in chapter five. The findings are analysed against the theoretical framework on coproduction as presented in Chapter two. The chapter links the research findings to the research question and affirms the research findings in order to come up with policy and theory conclusions and recommendations in chapter seven. The chapter is structured as follows: in section one, I discuss the nature of the partnership as a form of grassroots coproduction. I use section two to discuss power relations among the programme partners. Using section three, I relate Langrug programme activities and accomplishments to the activities and achievements of the four case reviews provided in chapter two. In the fourth section, I discuss the enabling factors and challenges that characterise the Langrug partnership. Finally, I use section five to state my last reflections on the chapter and to introduce the chapter on the policy and theory implications of the Langrug upgrading programme. The following section provides a discussion on the Langrug institutional arrangements.

### **6.1. Institutional arrangements: Nature of the partnership and grassroots coproduction**

The findings on the Langrug upgrade programme resonate with Mitlin's (2008) argument that the SDI and its country alliances are engaged in grassroots coproduction of settlement services. SDI's joint production of settlement services involves the creation of institutional frameworks that accommodate state actors, NGOs, civic movements and community residents (Mitlin, 2008). In Langrug, there is a partnership agreement that involves the municipality of Stellenbosch, South African SDI alliance, academics and the community. The Langrug partnership is pursuing innovative ways of providing infrastructural services to improve the structural performance of the settlement. This is akin to Parks et al (1981) and Marschall's (2004) argument that effective coproduction initiatives require an appropriate institutional arrangement that creates a framework through which partners operate. Thus, Langrug settlement upgrading is being driven by a formalised joint authority that is maintained through negotiation and shared responsibilities in order to facilitate a network of service providers that positively engages with the community (Mitlin, 2008). Similar to Watson's (2012) argument, the partnership in Langrug seeks to mobilise residents so that they champion the development agenda for their community. This is being done through various initiatives such as capacity building, active community involvement in the planning and implementation of the development activities and through different forms of community contributions.

Grassroots coproduction involves active mobilisation of the urban poor by civic membership organisations. The SDI as an NGO has a defined role to mobilise and mediate between state and non-state ways of settlement intervention to ensure collective democratic practice (Appadurai, 2001). In the same way, the role of CORC in mobilising the community of Langrug is paramount and overarching. A number of research participants indicated that CORC is mobilising the community in a way that the Municipality of Stellenbosch would not manage. Besides, all the partners are united through CORC which in turn provides backward and forward institutional linkages (see figure 5.1). In this partnership, the municipality is reliably utilising CORC as a service provider while the South African SDI alliance is working closely with CORC to coordinate development actions on the ground. Equally, the community and its leadership strongly rely on CORC to navigate complicated dynamics of settlement interventions. The municipality supports the cause of the SDI alliance and vice-versa, but it is the NGOs through community leaders which mobilise the community residents. The community leadership, which represents the ideals of the SDI alliance in Langrug, is the most critical element in ensuring a mobilised and coordinated Langrug community capable of warding off politically motivated challenges. The community cooperates, supports and leads the planning and implementation of the settlement projects. Therefore, the role of NGOs is essential in ensuring a successful engagement between state and non-state actors in Langrug (Mitlin, 2004; 2008; Watson, 2012; Appadurai, 2001; Pal, 2006). Further, NGOs play a crucial role in making Langrug development activities community initiated and grassroots-driven, thus, concurring with Mitlin's (2008) argument that SDI's version of coproduction is different from standard participation in urban planning and settlement upgrading (Watson, (forthcoming); Hassan 2006). As such, Langrug programme fits within Mitlin's (2008) assessment of coproduction as an engagement that locates itself within a broader struggle for choice, self, determination and meso-level political relations in which citizens with support from civic membership movements engage with the state to secure resource redistribution, self-management and local control of service provision. The following paragraphs discuss the role of individual institutions in the Langrug upgrade programme.

#### **6.1.1. The role of institutions in the Langrug programme: A web of relations**

Coproduction is a service provision model in which various partners create synergies through which parties contribute in complementary ways to jointly upgrade a settlement. Akin to Joshi and Moore (2004), Mitlin (2008), Watson (forthcoming) and Bovaird (2007), there is a



defined role of partners with a clear form of contribution towards the realisation of the objectives in the Langrug upgrade programme. As articulated by Appadurai (2001) and portrayed in figure 5.1, upgrading processes in Langrug are being realised through social and political processes involving networks, negotiations, savings, established local development committee, and drawing on academics for technical assistance (Watson, 2012). There are different components of the Langrug upgrading programme and these include community mobilisation, project funding, planning and implementation among others. The municipality and the SDI alliance contribute money and other resources for in-situ settlement upgrading while the community and its leadership support and undertake the upgrading processes. CORC as a key mediator among the partners provides direct technical assistance to the community and enhances local initiatives aimed at improving the settlement. It is clear that CORC's active involvement is very essential to facilitate and coordinate peaceful ways of engagement between Langrug and the state and this is similar to the roles performed by CODI of Thailand, Pamoja Trust of Kenya, Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) of Pakistan and SPARC of India as reviewed in chapter two.

Further, the community and its leadership receive capacity building in different ways and forms, and this is meant to enable the community to mobilise itself to facilitate joint interventions. The local leaders form one of the central institutions that facilitate the upgrade processes by playing a key role of mobilising the community, without which, the Langrug programme would arguably not exist by now (see figure 5.1). SDI plays a background but very crucial role by supporting CORC in terms of funding and facilitating the application of its rituals such as savings, exchange visits, precedent setting, enumerations and profiling in settlement intervention (Karanja, 2010; Watson, (forthcoming); Mitlin, 2008; Burra, 2005). In addition, FEDUP collaborates with other members of the partnership like ISN, community leaders, CORC and SDI to champion the cause of savings schemes so as "to increase the capacity of the community to engage with other stakeholders" (Karanja, 2010: 217). The institutional arrangements and relations in the Langrug upgrading programme resonate with those in the Baan Mankong and Kisumu informal settlement upgrading programmes (see chapter two; case reviews) (Boonyabancha, 2005). As argued by Watson (forthcoming), the role of the state through the Department of Informal Settlements is overarching and stretches into providing funds for large elements of infrastructure in Langrug (Appadurai, 2001). On the other hand, though embedded in the local government structure, the role of the ward councillor and ward development committees is not clearly defined in this partnership. For

example, there are no provisions for partners to incorporate the ward development fund that is annually allocated by the municipality to the office of the ward councillor and administered by ward development committees. In summary, figure 5.1 indicates that there are four clusters of institutions that form the Langrug partnership.

Having established the nature of institutional arrangements, I now turn to section two to discuss power relations among the partnering institutions.

## **6.2. Quiet Conflicts: Power relations in theory and practice**

Mayo and Moore (2002) argue that where coproduction occurs, power, authority and struggle to control resources are likely to be dividing factors. Institutional arrangements for effective coproduction require self-organised and self-checking institutional systems for negotiating partnership dynamics. Accordingly, the Langrug partnership is faced with dynamic power relations with challenges mainly being induced by the desire by some institutions to dominate and control the partnership, the community and programme resources. A number of research participants indicated that there are disagreements on the interpretation of the notion of development, modalities on community engagement and the overarching question of authority for some stakeholders. Accordingly, some research participants stated that the municipality uses the legal mandate argument and the assumption that they contribute more resources in form of land and money, hence, indirectly claim to have the right to dominate the partnership and to control the development activities. The issue of authority is very crucial for the Langrug upgrade programme, as Pal (2006) puts it; the state tends to use constitutional mandates and social contracts argument for legitimacy to see themselves as key and above other partners in delivering services in settlements. On the other hand, the ward councillor considers her office the most legitimated to control and supervise all the development activities in Langrug. Further, the Langrug community development committee is resolved on its daily partnership roles as they believe that they have community backing to do their work. However, the Langrug programme is characterised by devolved networks and mechanisms through which the residents are maintaining their unit of purpose to champion a common settlement development agenda (Appadurai, 2001).

Grassroots coproduction is also vulnerable to strategic power games which if not well regulated may result in some partners determining the conduct of others (Lemke, 2000). This assertion resonates with the current institutional relations in Langrug where partners, principally, the municipality, the ward councillor and community leaders are each seeking to

control the programme activities (Pal, 2006). Community leaders believe they have their own authority, just like the political and administrative spheres of the local government do. Findings indicate that the SDI alliance operating as CORC, SDI, ISN, FEDUP are 'very united' working towards mobilising and capacitating the community to locally drive the local development agenda as recommended by Pal, (2006: 514), Mitlin (2004). The SDI alliance is present in Langrug and their ideals are championed by community leaders, savings schemes, ISN, sector groups, and these community structures provide social capital necessary for sustaining a reasonably coordinated community front that holds considerable legitimacy and planning powers at neighbourhood scale. It is this relatively improved social and psychological accord among the community residents which is assisting the partnership to avoid being overtaken by community politics and political divisions (Pal, 2006). It is further observed by both the researcher and by a number of research participants that the community respects, trusts and supports community leaders. The following paragraphs discuss the notion of governmentality as one of the determinants of the current institutional relations in the Langrug upgrade programme.

#### **6.2.1. The display of governmentality in the Langrug programme**

Like Foucauldian arguments on the notion of governmentality, the Langrug partnership expresses various forms of governmentality (Lemke, 2000). Though committed to reforms and open to innovations to ensure flexible interventions in Langrug, the Municipality of Stellenbosch is still a critical entity in influencing the sphere of operations for other partners in Langrug. Apart from the ward councillor, all the research participants are concerned that the municipality has a tendency of flipping back to conventional ways of settlement intervention. The researcher observes that the municipal vision to upgrade Langrug through coproduction processes appears to revolve around few municipal officials stationed in the Department of Informal Settlements. Further, political structures as revealed by the ward councillor seem not to conceptually appreciate the idea of coproduction but still believe in the conventional role of the state in settlement interventions. Thus, lack of broad municipal and political support for coproduction in Langrug makes the Municipality of Stellenbosch struggle to effectively embrace the new initiative. For instance, the municipality drafted the values in the MoU for other partners to conform to, and this is akin to Foucault's (1982) postulation on "government as a conduct of conduct" (Lemke, 2002: 2). Further, findings indicate that the municipality had to take CORC for training to make them conversant with the municipal procurement procedures and processes; hence, the partnership lacks

independent rules of the game. Thus, in Langrug, the state still articulates its capacity to shape the possible field of action for other partners in the coproduction endeavour. On the other hand, key municipal officials located in the Department of Informal Settlements understand that CORC may not be happy on being subjected to state-orchestrated rigid ways of operations in upgrading Langrug.

However, governmentality is shaped in Langrug by the existence of a flexible MoU which stipulates the spirit of the partnership. A number of research participants revealed that small scale infrastructural projects are not subjected to municipal procedures but are rather implemented by the community and the local leadership with support from CORC. In such cases, CORC is expected to furnish the municipality with official documentation on such projects. Thus, it would be argued that the apparatus of the state still finds itself applied in the Langrug upgrade, leading to a scenario I describe as ‘decentralised form of governmentality’. This is so because the SDI alliance appears to conform to the demands of the state while community residents are very hopeful that the partnership will improve the living conditions. Conversely, if the SDI alliance does not act shrewdly, the partnership may end up promoting the ‘politics of patience’ where advocacy for effective action and community vibrancy necessary to hold the municipality accountable may get compromised, leading to a slackened government and sluggish project implementation (Appadurai, 2001).

Currently, the flexibility in the MoU allows for swift interventions and accounts for many improvements in water and sanitation services in the settlement. Thus, the MoU for Langrug is a very crucial document for pro-actively defining the scope of operations for partners and for containing the excessively dominant apparatus of the state (Lemke, 2000; Foucault, 1982). This is the document which has shifted the municipal focus on Langrug from techno-managerial to a moral one where partners freely express their daily experiences and contest views on managing both human and non-human waste and on how to improve the structure of the settlement. Thus, the debate has changed from the conventional sense as orchestrated by armchair professionals, to a one that is about ‘shit management’ on the site where it is found. Further, the application of dialogue forms another tool that promotes debate and discussion in ensuring that partners especially the municipality get reminded of their commitments to the MoU in particular and to municipal plans and policies on collaborative in-situ mechanisms on settlement interventions in general (MoS, 2013). Having discussed power and institutional relations, the following section delves into a comparative analysis of Langrug development activities and achievements.

### **6.3. Langrug key development activities and achievements: A comparative analysis**

Chapter two reviews some successful cases of coproduction in the global South. The cases were specifically drawn from Kenya, Namibia, India, Thailand and Pakistan. Like the Karachi settlement upgrade programme (Hassan, 2006), the development activities in Langrug focus on improving water and sanitation facilities and infrastructure. In Karachi, while the municipality focused on improving large scale sewer infrastructure, the community made contributions in terms of finance and sweat-equity and supported the planning and implementation of the projects (Hassan, 2006). This is exactly what is happening in Langrug where the municipality is supporting the upgrading of water and sanitation reticulation systems and is also supporting construction of the roads. The community is equally supporting the projects and championing the planning and implementation of both small and large scale infrastructures like the case of Karachi. In both Langrug and Karachi, there is emphasis on improving water and sanitation conditions in order to improve the living conditions for all residents. This departs from the traditional approach in South Africa where informal settlement interventions has traditionally focused on free-stand individual housing (Landman & Napier, 2010). Further, the multi-stakeholder approach and the similarity in programme scope in both cases further justifies grounds for Langrug to be dubbed a successful example of coproduction in settlement upgrading (Boonyabancha, 2005).

The case of coproduction of settlement services by the SDI alliance of Namibia resonates with the processes and focus of the Langrug partnership. In Windhoek, the partnership focused on delivering joint low-cost settlement solutions such as championing savings schemes, drainage improvement and infrastructural upgrading with the focus being to improve the living conditions of the poor (Mitlin, 2008). In Langrug, the scenario is not different as the partnership focuses on many small scale community-driven settlement upgrading initiatives such as turning toilet places into learning and literacy centres, designing and implementation of drainage systems, forming community sector groups such as on health, education and security, and emphasising the notion of savings schemes. Other target projects include upgrade of infrastructure to improve service delivery, mapping and profiling of settlement systems and structures. These initiatives in Langrug are very similar to other cases where SDI has applied its rituals of settlement upgrading to ensure broad-based pro-poor settlement interventions (Watson, 2012; (forthcoming); Mitlin, 2008; Pal, 2006).

Furthermore, the Baan Mankong settlement upgrading in Thailand focused on development issues and processes similar to the ones in the Langrug programme. The Thai programme

prioritised the channelling of government funds in the form of grants and subsidies direct to the poor communities for improving infrastructural services (Boonyabancha, 2005). This initiative and programme focus is similar to the current agreements in Langrug where the municipality has been contributing K2 million per year for infrastructural improvement since 2011. A similar organisation, namely CODI is in charge of the fund in Baan Mankong in the same way CORC manages a large expenditure component of the fund in Langrug. In both cases, there is considerable flexibility in deciding the use of the fund in achieving the goals of the partnership. Like the Thai case in Ayutthaya, the old capital city of Thailand, the Langrug partnership prioritises the survey and profiling of the settlement. The two cases underscore the use of settlement enumerations, profiling and mapping as a basis for defining the local development agenda and for ensuring effective state-society engagement (Mitlin, 2008; Watson, 2012; Karanja, 2010).

In addition, the city-wide settlement upgrading programme in Kenya's Kisumu city is another case which portrays a similar development focus to the ones in the Langrug partnership. The Kisumu programme prioritises enumeration exercises, building productive partnership with government, and strengthening savings schemes and community-administered micro-loans (Karanja, 2010). The programme also emphasised the role of community development committees and community leadership, and the building of a community resource centre to support information generation and dissemination (Karanja, 2010; Patel, 2004). In a similar way, the Langrug partnership considers strengthening of savings schemes as a top issue; there is an established information centre called the 'Bangalo' where community leaders operate from and where many external people visiting Langrug are taken for additional information on the settlement. The researcher observed that the building structure at Bangalo contains relevant information on Langrug upgrade such as community prepared maps, plans, housing designs and typologies. Similar to the Kisumu resource centre, the Bangalo structure is operational and accessed by any interested party, besides being used for meetings by stakeholders and visitors to the settlement. These two cases of coproduction depict infrastructural development, productive state-society relations, information generation and dissemination as priority development and partnership issues and this departs from the much criticised conventional and usually top-down and/or contractor-driven settlement interventions.

The SDI alliance of India presents the development of public toilets in Pune and Mumbai as a public sanitation project where the urban poor determined the processes while the alliance

maintained a productive partnership with the state (Burra, 2005). The Mumbai and Pune case are comparable to the development focus in Langrug. All the research participants in Langrug indicated that the partnership prioritises the improvement of the settlement structure by focusing primarily on water, sanitation and roads improvement. The construction of the wash facility is arguably a replicated idea of community toilets as championed by the Indian SDI alliance. It appears the focus on toilets in both the Indian case and Langrug is strategic as it is less complicated and is more compelling than focussing on housing which is complex and financially more demanding. Water and sanitation can easily be used to mobilise the community, to test pro-poor upgrade initiatives, and to strengthen the relationship between the state and the poor communities (Patel & Mitlin, 2004). Water and sanitation improvement easily fit into the needs-and rights based settlement development arguments. The focus on water and sanitation can also be tied to the notion of human rights and can be used as a form of social contract to determine the legitimacy of the state (Bradlow, 2013). Thus, water and sanitation is more justifiable as a governance issue than individual free-standing housing, hence, easier to build social capital around it as a public issue. In both the Indian and Langrug cases, the partnerships seek to build productive relationships between state and non-state actors as a mechanism to ensure substantive improvements in the living conditions of the urban poor (Watson, 2012; Mitlin, 2008).

The Indian SDI alliance also “coordinated the relocation of over 20,000 families to pave the way” for new developments (Mitlin, 2008:349). The SDI alliance operating in Langrug equally facilitated a smooth relocation of some families to pave the way for the construction of the road and drainage on the western side of the settlement to stop the flow of grey water onto a privately owned farm as demanded by the court. Thus, the two country-level alliances understand that in certain cases, relocations, much as they are unwelcome and complicated, are inevitable. However, the Indian case is slightly different from the Langrug case because community mobilisation in Langrug is not centred on strong federating and savings culture owing to the fact that the idea of savings is still new, weak and not fully understood by local residents. The following paragraphs argue that the Langrug coproduction endeavour and institutional mechanism provide a framework that can facilitate improvements in the living conditions of the urban poor.

### **6.3.1. Achievements: Infrastructure matters**

Watson (2012) presents coproduction as a frame where different realities come into clear juxtaposition, with subsequent engagement and contestation with each other, where

contentious and political issues ensue, and where issues can be rendered technical or where real gains for the marginalised can be secured. Watson's (2012) postulation clearly applies to what is happening in Langrug. The Langrug partnership experiences on-going contestation on development issues and approach. The partnership applies a coproduction institutional framework to achieve considerable improvements in the settlement. The partnership has upgraded toilets and water points into better facilities and turned them into clean communal centres for promoting learning and literacy. Other achievements so far include better settlement structure, better roads and improved accessibility (see figures 5.4 and 5.5), profiled and mapped settlement, construction of the community wash facility (see figure 5.3), improved drainage, controlled channels of grey water (see figure 5.2), community facilities for waste collection, health groups and increased dialogue between the community and the municipality. Thus, the interface between the practice of Langrug community politics and the practice of government is ultimately a positive one where real gains are being achieved to improve the living conditions in the settlement (Watson, 2012). Li's (2007) application of Foucault's term of 'permanent provocation' to describe happenings like the ones in Langrug, where there is a continuous reciprocal appeal among partners is appropriate. Despite these achievements, the researcher and a number of research participants observed that the Langrug programme suffers from misunderstandings vis-à-vis the scope and process of development issues while low-level conflicts are clear among partners. Thus, the Langrug partnership always experiences inevitable disagreements and this is attributed to conflicting rationalities among the partners and stakeholders (Watson, 2003). However, the ultimate interface of settlement development ideas in the Langrug partnership is positive. Drawing from field work, the researcher further observes that besides one respondent, the rest of the research participants believe that the current framework in Langrug is the only feasible and realistic way of confronting informal settlements in Stellenbosch and in South Africa where housing backlogs are endemic (Huchzermeyer, 2006; 2009; CORC & MoS, 2011).

In South Africa, the relationship between informal settlements and the state is usually a hostile one because of a poor record in service delivery. Communities usually apply violent tactics to communicate their displeasure on poor services while the state responds with considerable force to quell such volatile situations. However, the relationship between Langrug and the Municipality of Stellenbosch is currently experiencing minor conflicts which cannot hamper productive engagements. A common ground has been realised where the community of Langrug and key municipal officials such as the David Carolissen believe



in and use dialogue, debate and lobbying to jointly determine the creation of new Langrug. All the respondents stressed the centrality of dialogue and mutual respect to build a better Langrug. Therefore, the institutional paradigm in Langrug is providing tangible possibilities for improving both state-society relations and the material environments of the urban poor. This resonates with other SDI propagated coproduction engagements where governments, NGOs and communities work together to better the urban environment (Hassan, 2006; Mitlin, 2008; Boonyabancha, 2005; Karanja, 2010; Arputham, 2008; Burra, 2005; Watson, 2012).

A further analysis of coproduction processes in both Langrug and in other cases indicate that although power induced conflicts and inevitable clashes of rationalities will always affect the processes, the concept of coproduction is providing a reliable theoretical frame for confronting today's urban challenges in the global South (Watson, 2012). Thus, policy makers need to go beyond consensus seeking and focus on the design of effective institutional models that allow for more partnership-based community-driven metropolitan planning and settlement interventions. As is the case in Langrug, the framework is useful for addressing common settlement and institutional problems and defining shared development objectives (Pal, 2006). Hence, the concept of coproduction seems to be a useful construct for building planning theory from the South using case research to incorporate context and planning practice. Having discussed the achievements by the Langrug partnership, I now turn to section four to discuss the enabling factors and challenges characterising the partnership and the programme.

#### **6.4. Enabling factors and challenges: The Langrug experiences**

The application of the concept of coproduction in Langrug and other cases indicates that dynamic interactions among built environment professionals, civic movements, the state and the operation of the political processes is a determining factor for attaining success in any grassroots coproduction endeavour (Pal, 2006). For Langrug, the question is: how do partners as indicated in figure 5.1 manage to interact in a manner that facilitates progress in community development? As suggested by Pal (2006: 501), the partnership working in Langrug appreciates that coproduction of settlement services needs to “focus on the design of institutional mechanisms through which to address common problems” and determine shared values and objectives (Gualini, 2001). Accordingly, the partnership in Langrug demonstrates determination and capacity to manage misunderstandings by formulating a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to regulate the programme activities, define partner responsibilities and deploy dialogue in addressing inevitable conflicts. The MoU defines the scope of the

activities, promulgates shared values and principles which underpin the programme. Therefore, the document serves as a pro-active tool to regulate partner behaviour and actions so as to contain extreme action and compel would be free riders to work. The MoU is a very versatile tool for managing conflicts, building trust, ensuring accountability and transparency, ensuring mutual respect among partners, guaranteeing programme funding and promoting flexibility in both approach and scope of activities. By and large, the existence of the MoU for Langrug makes the programme by far special and flexible.

The partnership equally deviates from conventional approaches to settlement upgrading by projecting the role of both Langrug community and its development committee as important institutions. The Langrug community and its local leadership support the programme and realise that projects and activities provide hope to change their living conditions and social status. The Langrug community development committee is a central partner in determining a reasonably coordinated community force to continuously sustain the initiative and to overcome institutional, political and community divisions that would otherwise jeopardise the realisation of the partnership objectives. As Mitlin (2004) maintains, the community residents of Langrug and their local leadership are aware of the fact that representative democracy often fails to represent the interest of the less powerful groups especially in cases of limited resources. In line with the partnership belief that communities need to lead the programme, the role of professionals especially from CORC has been largely to guide communities in prudent decision making, plan making and improve community initiated plans to ensure basic standards, and to provoke new ideas and latent thoughts on settlement upgrading. As emphasised by Archer, Luansang and Boonmahathanakorn (2012), research participants from CORC, SDI and the Municipality of Stellenbosch were explicit that the role of planners and other built environment professionals in Langrug has been to make the process sustainable without their intervention. Thus, the role of professionals has been critical in providing correct guidance and capacity building for the community teams clustered as community leaders, co-researchers and sector groups among others (ACHR, 2010).

Furthermore, community action in Langrug is shaped by the emphasis on the use of dialogue to resolve conflicts and this is similar to recommendations by Gualini (2001). In rejecting extreme politicisation of programme decisions and in managing the inevitable conflicts, state and non-state actors in Langrug do not use confrontational means but rather apply dialogue. Thus, the Langrug coproduction process demonstrates and indicates the presence of expertise, especially within CORC, that orchestrates communicative people-centred practices and

shrewd strategic actions that recognise the power dynamics of the political context (Forester, 1989). The application of the MoU and dialogue by far makes the partnership more equipped and competent to deal in a flexible way with the invertible conflicts. The following paragraph discusses challenges affecting the partnership.

On the other hand, the challenges affecting the partnership include the presence of free riders, weak savings schemes, poor federating culture, limited funding arrangements, weak ISN and FEDUP structures, imbalance in power relations, political divisions and lack of a cordial atmosphere between the political and the non-political players. The reasons for the presence of free riders, low savings and poor federating activities are in part due to a dependency culture among the residents. A number of research participants attributed this syndrome to both the history of the country and the national legal environments which compel the three spheres of government to actualise the right to housing and guarantee quality public services for all South Africans (Huchzermeyer, 2006; 2009; Tshikotshi, 2009; RSA, 1996). Some residents still believe that they need to receive RDP housing; hence they play the role of spectators waiting for their turn on the rather stretched housing waiting list. In addition, the partnership has not done enough in sensitising community residents on savings to change the mentality to wait for government to lead the processes in improving the living conditions. This has made the source of funding for the programme principally externally anchored by the municipality and donors via SDI. The local representation of the SDI alliance in Langrug in particular and in Stellenbosch in general, is rather weak, and this is because the presence of ISN, FEDUP and the activities of CORC are relatively new in the region (Bradlow, 2013). As such, the capacity to mobilise and achieve broad-based support among the residents of Langrug is still facing challenges. In fact, Langrug is serving as a regional entry point for ISN and FEDUP and the Langrug local leaders have an additional mandate to form ISN structures across the municipality. Therefore, the maximum capacity to locally mobilise and sensitise residents on the partnership ideals such as savings schemes, federations, comprehensive in-situ settlement upgrade and volunteerism is not yet ripe among the local structures.

There is also the issue of inequity in the distribution of power and influence within the partnership, such that without the presence of a strong and trusted local leadership, the partnership would have suffered 'elite capture' (Pal, 2006:517). Apart from the ward councillor, all the research participants were unequivocal on the fact that the municipality subjects partners to rigid procedures and processes in both scope and approach to the settlement development activities. Pal (2006) found similar government practices excessive

and detrimental to collaborative settlement interventions in Kolkata in India. Here the SDI alliance needs to trade carefully and add advocacy to their role so that while facilitating a conducive environment for effective and productive state-society engagements, the need for practical policy reform by government is not overshadowed.

Furthermore, the researcher observes that many partners are not comfortable to have political structures lead the upgrading processes as they fear local politics, which are survivalist in nature, would hijack the programme. This resonates with Pal's (2006: 518) argument that "political structures are not the best vehicles to promote participation of the local marginalised populations". This is so because politicians tend to operate on partisan lines while political parties are structured systems which would thwart voices of the marginalised groups in coproduction programmes and project undertakings. As such, neighbourhood structures would be deprived of a conducive space that is necessary to facilitate their exercise of planning powers to influence the direction of the programme (Arun, 1988; Kitchen, 1997). To the contrary, the political structures in Langrug are determined to take the lead in mobilising the community on behalf of all the partners and stakeholders. Although the research findings indicate that the 2014 national elections will not significantly affect the Langrug upgrade programme, it appears the election mood has gained pace and is beginning to create anxiety among the political spheres and some stakeholders. However, the Langrug development committee seems to be politically neutral and this gives them a negotiating advantage with whichever political party is in power now and in the future. This neutrality of the community leadership is an essential element to ensure continuity of the upgrade programme in the face of leadership change at political level. The following section sums up the chapter and introduces the next chapter on policy and theory implications of the Langrug coproduction process.

## **6.5. Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the findings as collected from the field and as presented in chapter five. The chapter has argued that the institutional framework responsible for Langrug upgrade is similar to the other institutional mechanisms where coproduction projects have been implemented. Further, the chapter has argued that power and institutional relations are not always smooth in the Langrug project. However, it is established that the intensity of conflicts associated with skewed display of power in the programme is low and necessary to engender critical debate within the established framework. Like in other cases of grassroots coproduction in many cities in Africa and Asia, it has been established that the Langrug

programme focuses on improving water and sanitation as a critical basis and starting point for improving the performance structure of the settlement. The chapter has further argued that the Langrug coproduction arrangements provide a policy framework that embodies hope in changing the living conditions of the urban marginalised (Watson, 2012). However, despite considerable and successful efforts to maintain effective operations of the partnership, there are unavoidable challenges such as limited resources, political divisions and misunderstandings emanating from conflicting rationalities and power relations among the partners and stakeholders. Having analysed and discussed the research findings, the next chapter presents policy and theory implications of this research on settlement upgrading processes.

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## **CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **7.0. Overview**

Arising from the research findings, this chapter presents a series of interlocking arguments about how to think and act pragmatically to create more just and inclusive systems into being in the routine functions of the Municipality of Stellenbosch. Further, the chapter adds new concepts and prepositions to the theory of coproduction. To achieve this, I use section one to systematically present a summary of the research findings, policy implications and recommendations. Besides embodying new concepts and prepositions, the recommendations are meant to strengthen the Langrug partnership and to guide future policy formulation and implementation for informal settlement upgrading in Stellenbosch. In section two, I present a summary of the necessary factors and recommendations for effective grassroots coproduction. I use the third section to present recommendations for further case inquiries from the global South to assess whether the concept of coproduction positions itself as a promising theoretical frame for the 21<sup>st</sup> century planning practice. Finally, I use section four to provide conclusive reflections on this research project.

#### **7.1.1. Institutional and participatory model: The science of delivery**

The Langrug partnership is deliberately designed to support an unambiguously people-led, people-centred and people-controlled settlement upgrading strategy. The partnership is about fostering transformative and self-reliant settlement development practices modelled around: institutional mobilisation, resource mapping, community-based problem solving and progressive scaling of activities. There is a formalized institutional arrangement that involves civic movements and NGOs, the state, academics, communities and community leaders. Though the councillor has a huge influence on the programme, the office of the ward councillor and ward development committees have no direct roles in the partnership activities. Community structures and local leadership form a crucial entity in facilitating community-driven and community initiated upgrade processes. The Langrug community structures are reasonably competent in galvanising the community towards a common settlement agenda through active participation in the local development activities. However, the findings indicate that partners with more resources have a higher influence and control on the programme. Further, it is established that relevant stakeholders like the office of ward councillor are not kept in the know and this affirms the assertion by a number of stakeholders and partners that a poor communication system is negatively affecting the programme. Nevertheless, the findings indicate that the success of the Langrug programme is a sum of individual partner contributions.

This implies that grassroots coproduction requires active citizens capable of collective action and then choosing to apply such capability. Without a more focused community agenda of change, sustained coalitions, and a flexible engagement with government, the Langrug mechanism would be 'heat' without 'light'. Therefore, unless the urban poor have democratic means at their disposal by which their interests and local knowledge is used to define local reality and guide action, participation is not likely to create sustained pro-poor material and institutional change in Langrug and Stellenbosch at large. Hence, any kind of settlement intervention that lacks insertion on the ground in order to actively involve urban marginal populations cannot sustainably transform settlements in a spatially and socio-economically divided Stellenbosch.

The other implication of this kind of a partnership which considers the community and its local leadership as lead institutions is that the local people are not sitting idle waiting for government to 'eradicate' their settlement. Thus, without this partnership, partners in their individual capacities would lack the necessary competence to ensure mobilised and coordinated residents and local structures that would actively be involved in an informed way in defining, ranking and implementing settlement development activities. Therefore, failure to involve the marginal groups in a practical manner would only create exclusionary partnerships that would not differ from top-down structures (Roy, 2009). The major issue here is about managing and sustaining a productive interface between community residents and the municipality. This is where the role of civic movements and NGOs like SDI become vital partners in any other partnership-based in-situ settlement interventions in Stellenbosch. Thus, unless the more coherent 'epistemic communities' emerge in Stellenbosch, the municipality is unlikely to generate the kind of ideas that would point the way out of their urban crisis. The notion of epistemic community holds organic intellectuals important, emphasises the skill and reason of practical judgment in the moment of action.

While the use of the MoU is undeniably a good existing initiative, I recommend that the partners should be cautious not to create a rigid system. The MoU has the potential to create over formalised institutional arrangements, and rigid practices and procedures. Accordingly, defining the values and principles of future partnerships should not be a preserve of government but rather, a responsibility of all the partners. I further recommend that the communication system in the partnership should not be restricted to partners only, but be broadened to include relevant stakeholders like the ward councillor and ward development

committees in order to avoid suspicions and mistrust. In addition, I recommend that the media joins the partnership as an active stakeholder. The media needs to be an active partner of the SDI alliance, not to champion urban insurgency but rather to propel the alliance's ideals and values on settlement interventions. Besides being a strategic partner for policy reform advocacy, the media would augment the role of exchange visits and the transfer of ideas necessary for attitude change among the urban marginalised and the government. Moreover, the media should be engaged as a critical stakeholder in promoting a public discourse on in-situ community driven partnership-based settlement upgrading. With proper media engagement, the Langrug upgrade programme alone can serve as life-changing case for the entire Stellenbosch. Further, research participants from the community and local leaders indicated that only three people from the community have participated in international exchange visits. In line with this, I recommend that more local residents and local leaders get more exposure on the notion of savings and federations by involving them more in exchange visits to areas where savings and federations have succeeded. Such visits would increase the capacity for local structures to promote the ideals of savings and federations.

I further recommend capacity building of the SDI alliance in both Langrug and in Stellenbosch. A strengthened civic capacity will give more 'light' to the 'heat' as it is a force that enables civic movement actors and NGOs to be more effective in promoting partnerships. To support and facilitate city-wide policy change and implementation, CORC working through ISN and community leaders, should be given enough capacity to facilitate a deepening mobilization agenda in informal settlements while avoiding over reliance on project-driven settlement mobilisations. Stellenbosch needs organised communities that can function as devolved settlement networks and authority structures that can effectively engage with government. In addition, the Municipality of Stellenbosch should make community-led service delivery improvement a key objective of its daily operations. Therefore, mainstreaming of SDI practices into government policy for Stellenbosch could form a milestone achievement for the partnership. The following paragraphs provide policy implications and recommendations on power relations.

#### **7.1.2. Conflicts and innovation: A product of power relations**

An understanding of the interplay between collaboration and conflict in a grassroots coproduction is the basis for sustaining a productive interplay among partners. The findings indicate that there is a reasonably cordial relationship among SDI alliance, the Municipality of Stellenbosch and the residents of Langrug. However, in terms of influence and control, this



research reveals that power relations in the Langrug partnership are skewed with the municipality having a greater influence. It is also established that institutions with more resource capacity have tended to influence the partnership. Though the ward councillor is not officially allocated specific roles by the partnership, her office is currently linked to many misunderstandings in Langrug. The councillor feels undermined by the community leadership while the community and its leadership think the ward councillor is fighting the partnership and the programme. Overall, this research establishes that misunderstandings are induced by the desire by some partners and stakeholders to control both the community and programme resources. Further, the communication system does not keep every partner and stakeholder in the loop, and this creates a fertile ground for suspicion, mistrust and spaces for grassroots politics. Further analysis reveals that lack of a deliberate link between CORC and the ward councillor creates a gap between the political and non-political structures and institutions. However, the level of misunderstandings is not wild, and it is managed by competent members of the technical team present at CORC who use established conflict management tools. Strategic officials from CORC are supported by key municipal officials positioned in the Department of Informal Settlements.

The implications for these kinds of institutional and power relations are that such contested collaborations generate innovations in physical upgrading of the settlement which would be impossible if upgrading ideas are not contested. Secondly, contested collaboration in Langrug generates civic capacities amongst the partners in their persistent negotiations and this serves as a renewing source of institutional innovation. Further, the Langrug partnership exposes the disjuncture that exists between practice, policy, and law in a democratic South Africa. By so doing, such conflicts sustain an innovative and dynamic institutional order through practice. Thus, such internal conflicts are generating institutional changes that tie coproduction of land, housing and services to their inherent value in materializing citizenship among the residents of Langrug.

According to Bradlow (2013), conflicts in Langrug could have benefits in four ways namely: Firstly, the inevitable conflicts in the partnership produce spaces for inter- and intra-institutional learning that allow partners to be more adaptive to the dynamics of upgrading in-situ. Secondly, the conflicts are producing the space for 'quiet' struggle in which grassroots' actors, including local residents, are asserting their claims of citizenship through bargaining, negotiations, and coproduction processes. Further, these conflicts are producing spaces for

reconceiving the commons within and between partners, which in turn allow for cooperative and relational logics of development that has the potential to practically replace hierarchical modalities for settlement interventions. Fourth, conflicting linkages and rationalities produce spaces for acknowledging processes of norm-making and policy formulation that affirm and operationalise more plural notions of citizenship. Hence, the Langrug partnership brings to the fore the under-recognized benefits of conflicts associated with institutional pluralism in urban planning and settlement upgrading. Conflicts are igniting creative energy, resistance and movements for change. Conflicts are generating ideas that are fixing current and the future settlement issues and are arguably creating necessary convictions among partners that the city is trapped by the powers of geography, time and capital flows, hence, the need to change the status-quo and act differently. Exclusion of political structures in the mobilisation and programme design and implementation, I argue, contributes towards a non-politically infiltrated settlement agenda by the partnership.

Following these policy implications, I recommend that each organisation represented on the partnership should have a dedicated person responsible for ensuring smooth communication and resolving minor misunderstandings in the Langrug programme and other similar future arrangements within Stellenbosch. At the moment, only CORC and community leaders are actively involved in conflict resolution and this needs to be strengthened. Further, it is wise for CORC as a key mediator to work with community structures and civic authorities to map all the relevant stakeholders within Langrug and across Stellenbosch. Identified stakeholders such as politicians, the media and local opinion makers should be considered as critical entities and should be targeted with a clear objective to champion in-situ partnership-based settlement upgrading. Above all, to maintain the neutrality of the programme, all political structures should not be actively involved in the partnership but should rather be considered as relevant stakeholders who should be given all the information on the activities taking place in Langrug and this should be the norm for the city-wide programme. The following paragraphs summarise the findings and their implications on the activity focus of the programme.

### **7.1.3. Infrastructure and technology: Replacing delivery with production**

Interactions between the grassroots networks and municipal government in Langrug is proving to be a ground breaking innovation in achieving progressive outcomes in a poor settlement located in a fabulously wealthy area. The focus of the programme has been on improving the structural performance of the settlement and not on individual housing as per

the South African tradition. The findings indicate that the Langrug programme focusses on infrastructure and technology developments which prioritise public interest by investing in public goods and services. The partnership has prioritised and made progress in upgrading and installing infrastructures to improve water and sanitation services, settlement-wide security, transport and accessibility, healthcare, building productive networks and strengthening long-term capacity-building initiatives.

The activity focus in Langrug implies that progressive coalitions of urban actions and networks have the potential to address critical crises in public infrastructures in informal settlements. This is contrary to the unpopular but wide-spread and entrenched direct policy approach that seeks to 'eliminate' informal settlements through relocations, evictions, and narrow focus on individual free-standing housing. The answer in uplifting the thousands living informal settlements across Stellenbosch lies in appropriate mechanisms to provide infrastructure that would change the face of informal settlements and inspire the urban poor to believe such settlements are their permanent 'homes' and that they need to lead the initiatives to progressively and jointly deal with their homeless and poverty situations. As observed at Section F and across Langrug, such a municipal policy would trigger innovation among the urban poor and their partners to begin to think about their situations to upgrade themselves, rather than wait for the government to give them a house. As such, the Langrug partnership and other potential similar arrangements would orient the attitude and actions of the municipality towards achieving land production and settlement services with the poor while also generating and affirming the urban citizenship of marginal populations.

Thus, I recommend that the Department of Informal Settlements works with other partners and stakeholders to fashion a city-wide policy on partnership-based in-situ settlement interventions. This policy should prioritise joint production of settlement services and should guarantee tenure security for the urban poor in Stellenbosch. The policy should give adequate effect to the provisions of the 2004 BNG and UISP and to improve the Stellenbosch 2013-2017 Draft IDP provisions which focus on housing as the overall objective. The new and prospective policy should provide an alternative understanding of informal settlement upgrading as something other than the provision of a fully-serviced, titled, top-structure house. Accordingly, city-wide settlement policy should realise that government rationalities and technologies of urban control and management have inherent limits to serve more insurgent interests of the excluded and discriminated. Therefore, the municipality and its

partners have a role to identify the most strategic leverage points to push mainstream development agendas beyond municipal limits towards a more redistributive, inclusive and integrated footing, which grafts on to the systematic drivers explored by the Langrug grassroots coproduction model of service delivery (Pieterse, 2008). Such an approach would mobilise many residents and institutions within and outside Stellenbosch to work together in scaling up the innovative indirect approaches to settlement upgrading. In the following section, I provide final reflections on the enabling factors for grassroots coproduction.

### **7.2.1. The necessary factors for effective grassroots coproduction**

The Langrug partnership has a tripartite set of factors responsible for its success. These include formalised institutional arrangements, the capability of the community to provide effective local leadership and the partnership's exceptional aptitude to manage inevitable low-level conflicts. The presence of the MoU makes the partnership unique and resilient to challenging community and institutional dynamics. By stating the principles and values that underpin the partnership, the MoU reduces the scope for conflicts and confusion and guards against the infusion of myopic self-centred and narrow institutional and personal interests into the partnership activities. Additionally, grassroots coproduction is about active community participation. Hence, the success of Langrug is by and large, dependent on the capacity of local leadership and structures of authority to mobilise the residents and galvanize the community around the virtues of in-situ community driven partnership-based settlement upgrading. Finally, the partnership prioritizes dialogue in conflict management to ensure a harmonious institutional arrangement. The successful use of dialogue is dependent on the presence of versatile members of staff especially at CORC/SDI and municipality's DoIS who believe the Langrug upgrade programme is a typical case of negotiated compromise in settlement upgrading whose success depends on effective people-centred communication.

These three characteristics of the Langrug programme boarder on one key aspect of policy: the need to have a productive relationship between state and non-state actors to achieve in-situ upgrading. The positive interface between the municipality of Stellenbosch and the grassroots networks has enabled the partnership to avoid violent state-society conflicts which are regular experiences in other informal settlements. Secondly, without such a generally cordial institutional arrangement, there would be no sustainable substantive improvement in the living conditions of the residents of Langrug. Any settlement specific or city-wide institutional arrangement and policy, whether state or society or civic-led, that does not ultimately lead to both material and non-material transformation of the living environments

of the urban poor cannot inspire a democratic and orderly change of the unequal and dehumanising urban landscapes. Hence, the efficacy of such approaches and actions is compromised.

Consequently, I recommend that the current mutual and reasonably cordial relationship among the partners in the Langrug upgrade programme be strengthened by reaching out to relevant stakeholders like the ward councillor and ward development committees. The differences between the ward councillor and Langrug community leaders can be resolved through creative dialogue and improved communication, and this would reduce the current worrying levels of mistrust and suspicions among the programme partners and stakeholders. Future settlement specific and city-wide in-situ upgrade plans should formulate more proactive mechanisms such as indicating when and how to seek external arbitration, how to incorporate relevant stakeholders, and how to ensure that the management of joint funds is a public discourse. This is where strategic engagement with the media and relevant stakeholders becomes essential. The following paragraphs summarise ideas and issues on the challenges surrounding the Langrug upgrade programme.

#### **7.2.2. Challenges**

One of the challenges affecting Langrug programme is poor savings and federating culture. This is attributed to among many, the failure by the SDI alliance to fully explain the nature and purpose of the two types of savings. The multiplicity of institutions and authority structures that speak on savings schemes and federations in Langrug is partly responsible for the confusion created among community residents about these SDI virtues. Furthermore, the confusion and low zeal are exacerbated by the existing legal and policy environments which incite residents to sit and wait for free public services and individual housing. Weak savings and federations in Langrug are partly responsible for the community's failure to raise enough funds to match with the upgrading funds from both the municipality and CORC/SDI. This makes the programme hit risky levels in terms of continuity and sustainability of development activities because of over reliance on external financing. Additional challenges include the programmes' failure to have every Langrug resident actively participating in the upgrading processes. Besides, imbalanced power relations present another challenge that needs a careful watch in the current and future programmes.

In terms of policy, the implications are that continued weaker savings and federating culture has the potential to perpetuate the existing struggles in community mobilization in order to

get more Langrug residents actively participating in the upgrade projects. Further, poor savings culture will continue to weaken the negotiating capability of the community, hence, continued skewed display of power and influence on the programme. Skewed power relations if not checked would further frustrate some partners and this has the potential to disintegrate the partnership. Skewed power relations equally have the potential to promote partisan, institutional and individual narrow interests and this may happen at the detriment of broader programme objectives. Ultimately, poor savings and inadequate community funds have the potential to slow the rate of progress in upgrading activities. If not creatively handled, slowness in actualising more material improvements in Langrug might frustrate community residents and local structures and dampen their zeal to continue volunteering and supporting the programme.

Following these policy implications, I therefore recommend that the savings group at Section F and the local ISN representatives should work closely with the Langrug community development committee and the sector groups to locally promote the notions of savings and federations. Further, the savings scheme at Section F should be supported and be strengthened to create a local precedent on purposeful savings. All other entities with interest in savings schemes should work with these local structures during sanitisation, establishment and subsequent management of the savings schemes. I also recommend that more exchange visits need to happen between Langrug community structures and other areas in South Africa and beyond where federations and savings schemes have excelled. In addition, federations and savings schemes in Langrug and similar future programmes in Stellenbosch should be issue-driven; hence the need to link the ideas to sector groups. This will give 'life' to the idea of savings and federations and may have a practical touch on the lives of many residents, hence, more appreciation. Moreover, I recommend that the media gets strategically incorporated in the crusade for championing the idea of ISN, savings and federations across Stellenbosch. In terms of skewed power relations, I recommend that the partners in the programme begin to talk more often and openly about it. This could strategically be championed by CORC which is a key mediator in the Langrug partnership.

At city-level, I recommend that the SDI alliance supports the ISN to build structures in all the informal settlements in Stellenbosch. This would strengthen 'grassroots voices' that would champion partnership-based but grassroots-driven settlements upgrading. To effectively do this, I suggest that the media gets actively involved to augment existing mechanisms in disseminating the ideas of the SDI alliance and the virtues of partnership-

based settlement upgrading. I further propose that the drafting of the values and principles to guide future settlement specific and city-wide informal settlement upgrading should be done by all the partners. In addition, the SDI alliance should avoid being reduced to a moribund vis-à-vis settlement upgrading by relying more on programmes unlike emulating the state by being project-driven. Accordingly, building stronger devolved networks such as ISN in Stellenbosch should not require simultaneous upgrade activities in all the informal settlements in Stellenbosch. These SDI-linked local structures should equally function as advocacy networks for policy reforms by government. Finally, I submit that the findings indicate that the practice of coproduction in Langrug is an alternative policy matrix that can serve as a touchstone for sustainable interventions in informal settlements across Stellenbosch. In the following section, I provide a summary and recommendations on the implications of this case on planning practice.

### **7.3.1. A summary of planning theory ideas and recommendations**

Informality is not an essential preference of the urban poor and it serves primarily as an alternative to the constraints of formal structures. The planned city in the global South can neither eliminate nor subsume the informal qualities and practices of millions of its inhabitants. Thus, the informal city persists; its inherent strengths resist and defeat efforts to impose order, making the realisation of a totally planned city a myth (Pieterse, 2008). Hence, the present-day global South city calls for a profound re-orientation in the manner in which we study it. The approach taken by planners and other built environment professionals working in Langrug offers an alternative to that of traditional planning rooted in the global North rationalism. This research affirms that coproduction practices in Langrug give adequate room for a deep consideration and appreciation of the local agency, skill, endurance and effort embodied in the survival strategies of the urban poor. This vital work on Langrug provides an important example of one alternative way to respond to the insurgent energies of urban informality. I recommend further comparative case inquiries to consolidate arguments on coproduction as a useful normative theoretical frame for the 21<sup>st</sup> century global South planning practice. In a world where one in every six people survives on informal arrangements, if planning practice is to be relevant and responsive to the current challenges, then planning education should focus on developing problem-based learning and teaching. Settlement problem-solving should be the centre around which students' entire planning education need to revolve. In the following section, I provide an overall summary of this dissertation.

#### **7.4. Conclusion**

This final chapter has provided a summary of the findings and the policy implications of the research. The chapter further provides recommendations to strengthen the Langrug partnership and to guide future settlement specific and city-wide upgrade policies and programmes in Stellenbosch. In addition, the chapter has used the Langrug case to add new concepts and prepositions on the theory and application of coproduction in settlement interventions. The chapter concludes that Langrug institutional arrangements depict a typical coproduction arrangement where many institutions are working together to improve the structural performance of the settlement. Further, the chapter concludes that the interactions in the partnership are not always neat and that success depends on on-going effective management of power and institutional dynamics and low-level conflicts. Finally, the chapter maintains that the role of planners and other built environment professionals in Langrug departs from their traditional role of provisioning where governments are the sole providers of settlement services while residents assume the role of passive clients and consumers. Thus, the chapter recommends comparative case research to establish and consolidate the concept of coproduction as a new frame of urban planning practice in the global South.



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## Appendix

1. Ethics forms
2. Research questions: Interview guide

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## **Research questions: Interview guide**

### **Interview schedule A: For community residents / community leaders**

#### **THE INSTITUTIONAL DYNAMICS OF PARTICIPATORY SLUM-UPGRADING PROCESSES: THE CASE OF LANGRUG INFORMAL SETTLEMENT**

1. Introductions and purpose of the interviews
2. When did you arrive in Langrug?
3. Where did you come from and how did you find yourself in Langrug/leadership position?
4. How did you come to get involved in the upgrade process of the settlement?
5. What triggered the partnership initiative to upgrade Langrug informal settlement?
6. Why was Langrug chosen amidst other competing settlements in Stellenbosch?
7. What institution/community structure are you involved with in the upgrade process and how did this organisation come about?
8. How and why was a partnership decided amidst other options?
9. How do partners collaborate in this partnership, who performs what?
10. What role do community residents/leaders perform in this partnership?
11. Do all partners contribute effectively? What measures are put in place to ensure effective collaboration? What happens to community residents who cannot contribute?
12. What happens to community residents who cannot be members of the savings schemes/groups?
13. Who makes decisions about how the savings group is managed? Are there ever disagreements and misunderstandings about the management system of community and individual savings?
14. How does the leadership of your organisation/savings group report back to members?
15. What are your organisation's long term goals for the upgrade programme and the future of Langrug?
16. Is there a mechanism to ensure continuity and sustainability of development activities? (Researcher elaborates on sustainability).
17. What are the key achievements this far?
18. What are the challenges affecting the programme and how has the community responded to them?
19. What strengths characterise the programme and how has the community/savings groups responded to them?

20. Who is who in this set-up? Are all institutions equal?
21. Are there incidences of deep misunderstandings among the partnering institutions? If so, what causes these conflicts? .....and what are the consequences this far?
22. Do politics and power relations play a role in this programme and how does this affect the upgrade processes?
23. Are you worried that upcoming national elections in 2014 may destabilise the partnership, and if so how?
24. How special is the Langrug settlement upgrading programme from other ordinary processes?
25. Would you argue for a similar programme for another informal settlement in Stellenbosch? If so, why and what additions would you suggest?

*Thanks you for your time!*

#### **Interview schedule B: For the Municipality of Stellenbosch / ward councillor**

#### **THE INSTITUTIONAL DYNAMICS OF PARTICIPATORY SLUM-UPGRADING PROCESSES: THE CASE OF LANGRUG INFORMAL SETTLEMENT**

1. Introductions and purpose of the interviews.
2. What are your full names?
3. What is your designation and for how long have you been involved in informal settlement upgrading?
4. When and why was the Department of Informal Settlements formed at your municipality?
5. When and why was Langrug informal settlement chosen amidst other competing informal settlements in Stellenbosch?
6. What kind of institutional framework is responsible for the Langrug Informal settlement upgrading programme?
7. Why did Stellenbosch Municipality go in partnership with other organisations to upgrade Langrug informal settlement?
8. Why did the municipality decide to support partnership-based in-situ settlement upgrading other than other options?
9. Who is who in this set-up? Are all institutions equal?
10. What is the role of the Municipality in this partnership, and how do other partners in this programme complement your contribution?



11. What are your long term goals for the programme and the future of Langrug?
12. What is the role of community and individual savings in this programme; and in the long term future of Langrug?
13. How do you deal with community residents who cannot be members of the savings schemes/groups?
14. What are the key programme achievements this far?
15. What are the challenges affecting the programme and how has the community responded to them? How have you handled with these challenges?
16. Do politics and power relations play a role in this programme and how does this affect the upgrade processes?
17. Are you worried that the 2014 national elections may destabilize or even lead to the cancellation of the partnership agreement, and if so how and why would this happen?
18. How special is the Langrug settlement upgrading programme? Give reasons why you would recommend a similar institutional arrangement for another settlement upgrade project in your municipality.
19. Finally, is Langrug programme a success story or not? Give reasons.

***Thanks you for your time!***

NB: Interview guides for the SDI alliance members were based on both schedule A and B.